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INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT

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AMERICA'S DOUBLE AGENDA

After the euphoria surrounding Obama's visit doubts surface about Uncle Sam's embrace

- **WHAT'S IN IT FOR INDIA?**
- **WHY IS THE US SOFT ON PAKISTAN?**

R.N.I. NO: DELENG/2007/19719

0976-2906

Haryana

Towards Quality Health Care For All

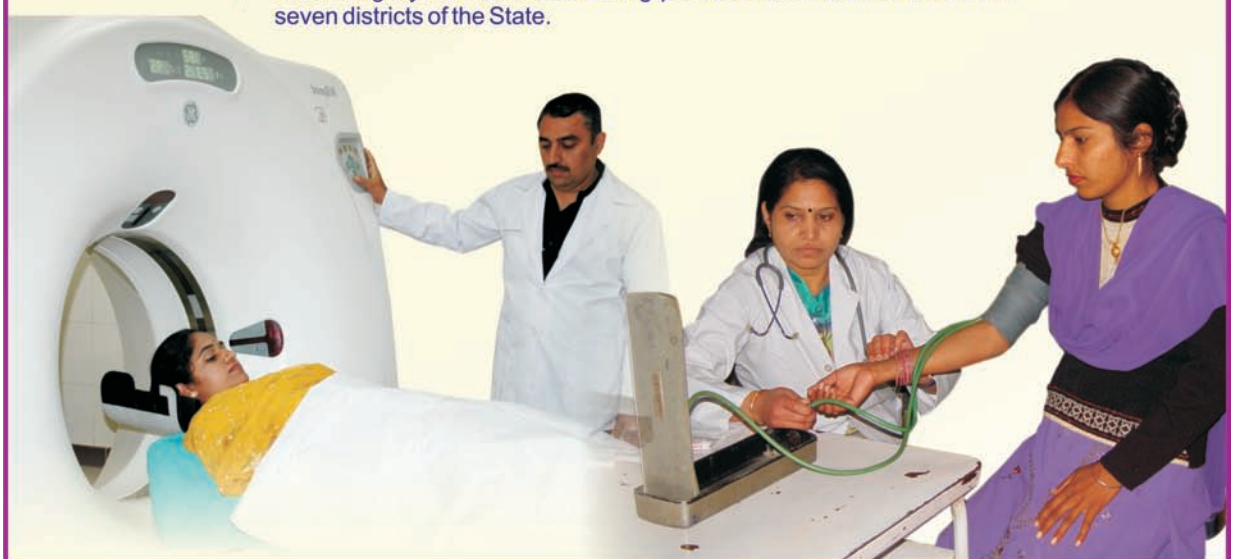
Comprehensive Surgery Package Introduced In District Hospitals Of the State

Bhupinder Singh Hooda
Chief Minister, Haryana

- A new Surgery Package Programme is being implemented to provide cost-effective, hassle-free and affordable surgeries to patients in district hospitals of Haryana.
- Families living below-poverty-line and residents of urban slums notified by the Department of Urban Local Bodies are entitled to free surgeries under this scheme.
- Now, the patients opting for being operated in Government Civil Hospitals of Haryana will be given surgery packages on the pattern of private hospitals.
- The price in this surgery package would be quite nominal as compared to the private hospitals.
- Once the amount for surgery is charged from the patient, the entire responsibility of providing medicines and medical equipments to patients would be that of the hospital administration.

Free Medicines For All

- Free medicines are provided to pregnant women in case they require to undergo operation at the time of delivery.
- Free test and treatment facilities are being provided to all TB patients under TB Control Programme.
- Multi Drug System cases are being provide medicines free of cost in seven districts of the State.



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From the Editor-in-Chief

WE end this year in the belief that the events that have transpired during its course have proven without a doubt that the kind of independent niche journalism that *gfiles* practises is more relevant to the profession of disseminating informed news and opinion than ever before. Our basic premise of good governance has been that political parties – as the Congress once was – should be organized to be of service to the nation. But when, instead, they convolute this command and subordinate the nation to serving their interests, they become the harbingers of banana republics in which governance is of, for, and by the governors.

In response to my hand-wringing over the fall-from-grace of prominent journalists mentioned in the infamous Radia tapes (India's own Dita Beard, the Nixon-era lobbyist of ITT in the US), my friend Arun Singh, Rajiv Gandhi's former Defence Minister whose principled resignation over the Bofors issue shook the entire nation, wrote me a note that I think should be widely shared. He says the worst is yet to come.

"I fear the sheer quanta of financial inducements or 'power plays' now up for grabs are just so tempting in the context of the 'poor India' (to which we were accustomed) that there are hardly any individuals left for whom such inducements are not sufficient to garbage-bag any sense of individual morality or integrity," he writes.

Arun observes that even men who exuded integrity, appear to have been "so seduced by the joys of office (disguised of course by who-else-can-do-this-job-as-well syndrome – all the stuff we have all seen before) that they are prepared to junk the national interest for a rare and precious commodity (spectrum) in order to stay in office or purportedly to keep a party in office. I don't see that as very different to others doing similar things with other commodities – iron ore, bauxite etc."

Every day we now find a new breed – the IAS, banks, NGOs, corporates. There is no end to all this unless the rule of law as set out originally is implemented. The same people who rail against these fixers and crooks in their drawing room cocktail parties or at the Delhi Golf Club or the Gymkhana Club have no problems in meeting and socializing with them, marrying their daughters and sons to them. Arun quotes a Malayalam adage: When the fence starts eating the paddy, what can the farmer do? The fence, he says, "is now gobbling up the paddy at a rate that was previously unimaginable and everybody who has the capacity, opportunity, fortune (?) to be able to participate, is joining the fence and abandoning the paddy."

The Leftists and social activists believe that the result, predictably, is rebellion, something most believed was impossible in "tolerant India". In a plaintive tone, Arun says: "I'm currently overwhelmed by great regret, horror and sorrow at the India I have helped make – so far removed from the one I thought I was working for. So many millions depend on us (the educated, the wealthy, the influential) and so many millions are being abandoned by the day."

His parting advice in that note: "Bash on with *gfiles* – it ensures we can't say 'I didn't know'.

INDERJIT BADHWAR

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Cover Photograph: PIB AND REUTERS

The POSCO shenanigans

The POSCO piece is a timely one and I appreciate the writer's analysis and questioning of the MoEF's role. It would be too naïve to expect companies like the Korean steel giant to be sensitive to our environmental and social concerns but when our own people are in connivance under the guise of being the guardian, it does put us under threat. We want development, big factories to provide employment, infrastructure to make us a self-sufficient prosperous nation but surely not at the cost of our environment which endangers the existence of our people. I am glad that, despite being the less successful younger sibling in the media, you continue to address genuine issues in the larger interest of the nation and have avoided hopping on the bandwagon of media groups which take profitable sides and organisations which get paid to influence public opinion.
Jayant Das, *Bhubaneswar*

Well written. How many warnings are to be overlooked before a catastrophe?
Thirumalai, on blog

This is a good cover story.
Amit Kumar, *on blog*

Sharan was quite stirring!

Good choice of subject and good presentation ("First Stirrings / Shankar Sharan"). I would encourage you to pick up personalities like Sharan who call a spade a spade. His take on some of the big names of Indian politics was fascinating. And his message to the incumbent bureaucrats should open some eyes.
Koshi Paliyal, *Kerala, on email*

Kudos to Mr Shankar Sharan for speaking the half truth! He seems to be a perfect blend of a bureaucrat turned politician. A little research on the net gives us a finding which Mr Sharan failed to elaborate: he claims to be a revolutionary but was miserably defeated twice with his deposit forfeited in two parliamentary polls! He hankered desperately for plum posts after retirement but could not succeed because of one reason or the other! While our nation is bleeding because of the Maoist menance, people like Shankar Sharan and Arundhati Roy are advocating their anti-national agenda to stay in the limelight!
Naina, *on blog*

Sharan's words were an eye-opener. Why do our leaders ignore such personalities who have genuine concern for the people and whose experience can greatly aid in decision-making? Sharan's discourse should force the corrupt bureaucracy to do some soul-searching. Great job. I look forward to more such articles.
Diwarkar Jha, *Patna, on email*

Unwarranted precedence...

I would like to point out to Col R Hariharan ("The Last Post for the soldier") that the Chief of Army Staff is lower than the Chairman, UPSC, in the Warrant of Precedence. But no matter. So is the Cabinet Secretary. So is the Attorney General. So are Lieutenant Governors, even in their own States. Not sure why the Chairman, UPSC, enjoys such exalted status.
Aditya, *on blog*

Hooked on the laughs

Interesting article and nice illustration ("Bombay, 1964: Prohibition and its wake"). I like your choice of writers and subjects. Every month, I look forward to the "Bric-A-Brac" and "...by the way" sections. Provide laughs and are informative, too.
Amitabh Sanghvi, *Mumbai*

gfiles: Powerful and creative

Very powerful magazine. Keep it up!
Neeraj Nanda *from Australia, on Facebook*

HARYANA Towards new horizon !!!

Haryana has emerged as the front runner State of the country in the area of all round development. The priorities of the State Government are ensuring sound infrastructure coupled with a vibrating social sector. We are committed to make Haryana an educational hub, create more avenues of employment by accelerating industrialisation, besides stepping up agricultural production. Adequate and improved health facilities for all will be our top concern. We will also focus on uniform development of the State.

Bhupinder Singh Hooda
Chief Minister, Haryana

Salient Features:

The State Government has constituted a State Farmers' Commission for taking up the concerns of the farmers and finding solutions to their problems.

Year 2010 is being celebrated as 'Energy Year'. A Nuclear Power Plant of 2800 MW would be set up in Fatehabad. The State Government is striving to ensure that Haryana becomes self-sufficient in the matter of power generation by the year 2012-13.

Rajiv Gandhi Education City is being set up in Kundli in district Sonepat and 25 percent of the seats would be reserved for domiciles of Haryana. A reservation of 30 percent has been made for girls in Industrial Training Institutions.

With a view to control the excess tapping of underground water and to ensure participation of each category, Haryana Government is going to launch Underground Water Development Regulation and Control Bill soon.

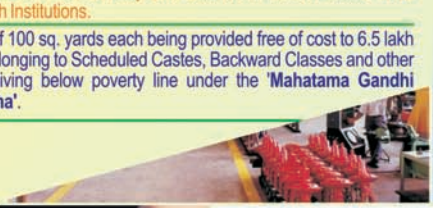
Indira Bal Swasthya Yojna implemented to improve the health of all students by providing preventive and curative healthcare.

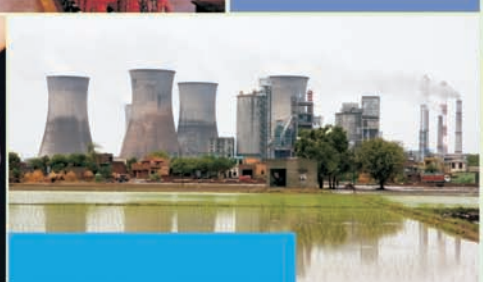
Social, economic and educational development of women top priority of the State Government.

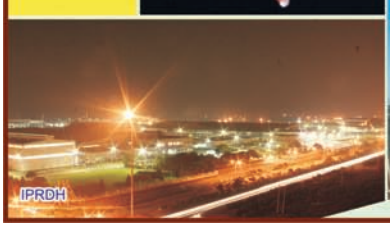
'Shagun' grant money being provided to families belonging to Scheduled Castes living below the poverty line for the marriage of their daughters and to widows belonging to all sections of society for their own re-marriage as well as for the marriage of their daughters increased from Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 31,000.

Free medicines being provided to all patients including outdoor and casualty patients, ante-natal services, delivery and caesarean-section cases in all Government Health Institutions.

Residential plots of 100 sq. yards each being provided free of cost to 6.5 lakh eligible families belonging to Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes and other weaker sections living below poverty line under the **'Mahatama Gandhi Gramin Basti Yojna'**.







HARYANA... in the forefront ...

IPRDH

Wooing 300 m In 900 m be

The President furthered the agenda, started by Bush, of building ties with the Indian middle class for US gain

by **MG Devasahayam**

DISSECTING US President Barack Obama's Diwali visit to India, distinguished diplomat Chinmaya R Gharekhan has this to say: "Mr Obama no doubt came to India with a definite agenda in his mind. His main target audience was youth and business circles – the middle class, in other words. It is the middle class which will increasingly determine our economic and foreign policy. This GenNext is probably no different from previous GensNext in wanting to get rich quick; only that it has more opportunities to do so now. If the middle class is brought into close embrace with America that would be the best guarantee of a pro-U.S. orientation of the country...."

This has been the US aspiration since the dawn of the liberalization-privatization-globalization era in the early 1990s. This was the agenda former President George Bush – loved

dians, damned

PIB

by every Indian, if Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is to be believed – publicly articulated when he came calling in April 2006. He did not mince words when he openly declared, not once, but twice – in Hyderabad and New Delhi – that the "USA would like to engage with 300 million Indians".

Who are these "300 million Indians" in a country of 1200 million? This was the "prosperous middle class" that UPA-I was attempting to create by mortgaging India's human and natural resources to the rampaging MNCs, mostly American. This was sought to be done through a plethora of policy decisions: 100 per cent FDI in real estate, banking, insurance and retail trade, the nuclear deal, the knowledge initiative in agriculture, lucrative SEZs, indiscriminate privatization of higher education, welcoming foreign universities, Americanizing the civil services and so on.

WITH the "nagging" communists in UPA-I applying the brake, some of the "market-making" agenda were slowed. UPA-II, free of the communist nuisance and with ideologically bankrupt coalition partners in tow, wanted to go the full hog and complete the unfinished agenda of freeing the country from the 900 million laggards and converting it into a buzzing MNC market. Hence the encouragement of unabated inflation, high wages, luxury consumption, black money, landgrabbing, wealth accumulation, and blatant scams and scandals. The devious plan seems to be to transform India's low-cost economy into a high-cost one to match that of the US.

Enthused by all this, President Obama seems to have honed his agenda to capture this emerging market to make up for the declining American market battered and bruised by the Chinese avalanche. He chartered his tour itinerary in India accordingly and was accompanied not by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton but by Commerce Secretary Gary Locke. He flew into Mumbai to address the business class to canvass more of the same to "help create jobs in the US".

In the event, Obama's Delhi visit was more a formality and included some more signing of deals with the government, the details of which remain secret. Though the entire visit appeared hazy, one message came out clearly. Now that the 300-million Indian market has taken off, the US does not really bother about the politicians and bureaucrats in Delhi who have served their purpose. It showed.

The urgency of Obama's visit and the near panic he exhibited in declaring that creation of jobs in the US was the main purpose of his visit, at first appeared strange. It appeared less so after reading the following story circulating on email: Here it goes. The Emma Maersk, owned by a Danish shipping line, is displacing North American-made commodities with "Made in China" goods in a big

Obama's Delhi visit was more a formality and included some more signing of deals with the government, the details of which remain secret.

PIB

Obama addressing the Indian Parliament: sweet nothings?

way. This monster ship, which transports goods across the Pacific in just five days, has been commissioned by Wal-Mart to get all their goods from China. The ship holds an incredible 15,000 containers and has a 207-foot deck beam. Two more ships of the same size are to be built in the next couple of years.

Ninety-one per cent of Wal-Mart products are made in China. A well-researched documentary says that all the containers are shipped back to China empty because the US' high-cost economy is no match for China's. That the US sends nothing back on these ships speaks volumes for the current financial state of the country and the cause of such high unemployment.

EARLIER, the refrain in the US was "Pakistan is an ally, India is a market". It is now changing to "China fills US markets, US fills India's". This is precisely why the US wants to engage with 300 million Indians.

Top among the goodies that the visiting President threw the way of the ruling class was his "looking forward" to India becoming a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council. Does it mean anything? One can look forward to anything in the years ahead, even to Indians topping the Olympic medal tally, whether it happens or not. As if to contain the contrived euphoria on this innocuous statement, US Assistant Secretary of State Robert Blake clarified: "The reform of the UN Security Council and India's bid to gain a permanent seat will be a long and complicated process." Yet the alacrity with which Prime Minister Manmohan Singh welcomed this vague and tentative utterance indicates the fawning nature of India's ruling establishment.

Now that the 300-million Indian market has taken off, the US doesn't bother about the politicians and bureaucrats who have served their purpose.

Encouraged by this fawning, Locke issued a stern advisory that would consolidate the 300-million middle class market while further alienating the 900 million "laggards": "We believe that India should be more open to foreign direct investment in a variety of sectors, because we believe that some of the impediments for FDI actually hinder India's ability to achieve its goals of economic progress, job creation for the people and growth of the economy...." Commerce Minister Anand Sharma was all ears.

Be that as it may, enamoured of the prospect of jobs and partial prosperity stemming from this target group, the US

PIB

Obama with children of artisans: the real passage to India

Obama honed his agenda to capture this market to make up for the American market battered and bruised by the Chinese avalanche.

has won over a large pool of faithful foot soldiers ranging from bureaucrats, infocrats, technocrats, academics, economists, bio-technologists, nuclear scientists, political representatives, professionals and call centre employees to even NGOs and welfare organizations, who reinforce the subjugation, hegemony and greed of global capital led by the US regime. These worthies readily endorse the parasitical "development model" wherein thousands of hectares of forests are flattened and millions of tribals are banished from their land to pave the way for MNCs to establish their mining and industrial empires.

Obama has called India an "indispensable and natural ally". Does he care to know what the indispensable priorities for the largest democracy in the world are? He should also ponder as to whether India could really be a natural US ally with 75 per cent of its people, most living on less than a dollar a day, totally removed from its radar. The President has a historic responsibility to undo historical injustices inflicted upon India's poor and disadvantaged by the policies and practices of greedy globalization and shift towards a pro-people approach in contemporary policies. The US should deal with 1200 million Indians if it wants the country to be its "indispensable and natural ally".

For this Obama has to change the gathering perception that he is nothing more than the soft face of US corporate culture. This was not so when he got elected. "Change" and "hope" were the two words which marked his election. However, two years down the line, very little seems to have changed for American citizens and for millions across the world. What is worse, he has not been able to stand up to the ravaging of human rights in many parts of the world and pursue an inclusive growth agenda. g

Change for the better, but...

by **Frank Silbey**

I confess to an increasing feeling of pleasure at what appears to be a growing rapprochement between the US and India on the one hand, and between Israel and India on the other. The Indian American community here is growing in political maturity and power as well as economic success. And Israel has become a powerful little science and technology center with worldwide implications.

I, for one, am simply appalled and hostile to America's wrong-headed foreign policy of embracing Pakistan and its ruling clique's corrupt and destructive policies. All our military aid is being devoted not to any effort against the Taliban, but instead to preparing for a conventional war against India. The corruption of the Pakistan regime and its aid, covert and overt, to the Taliban, is an open and disgusting secret. The war in Afghanistan will end inconclusively, at best. Karzai is corrupt to the bone and sooner or later this realization and the unwinnability of our effort will sink into the American public. We desperately need to start rebuilding our infrastructure with the money we are pissing away on this war.

The coming years will, I believe, reveal a growing series of concerns about China and its growing sphere of influence, turning the Indian Ocean into an area of contention that will create a growing area of cooperation between India and America.

The writer is a US-based analyst and a former chief investigator for the Senate

Another tilt t

Obama's Indian visit cannot mask the US' con indispensable strategic ally in the region for a

by **George Friedman**

BOB Woodward has released another book, this one on the debate over Afghanistan strategy in the Obama administration. As all his books do, the book has riveted Washington. It reveals that intense debate occurred over what course to take, that the President sought alternative strategies and that compromises were reached. But while knowing the details of these things is interesting, what would have been shocking is if they hadn't taken place.

It is interesting to reflect on the institutional inevitability of these disagreements. The military is involved in a war. It is institutionally and emotionally committed to victory in the theatre of combat. It will demand all available resources for executing the war under way. For a soldier who has bled in that war, questioning the importance of the war is obscene. A war must be fought relentlessly and with all available means.

But while the military's top generals and senior civilian leadership are responsible for providing the President with sound, clearheaded advice on all military matters, including the highest levels of grand strategy, they are ultimately responsible for the pursuit of military objectives to which the commander-in-chief directs them. Generals must think about how to win the war they are fighting. Presidents must think about whether the war is worth fighting. The President is responsible for America's global posture. He must consider what an unlimited commitment to a particular conflict might mean in other regions of the world where forces would be unavailable.

A President must take a more dispassionate view than his generals. He must calculate not only whether victory is possible but also the value of the victory relative to the cost. Given the nature of the war in Afghanistan, US President Barack Obama and Gen David Petraeus — first the US Central Command chief and now the top commander in Afghanistan — had to view it differently. This is unavoidable. This is natural. And only one of the two is ultimately in charge.

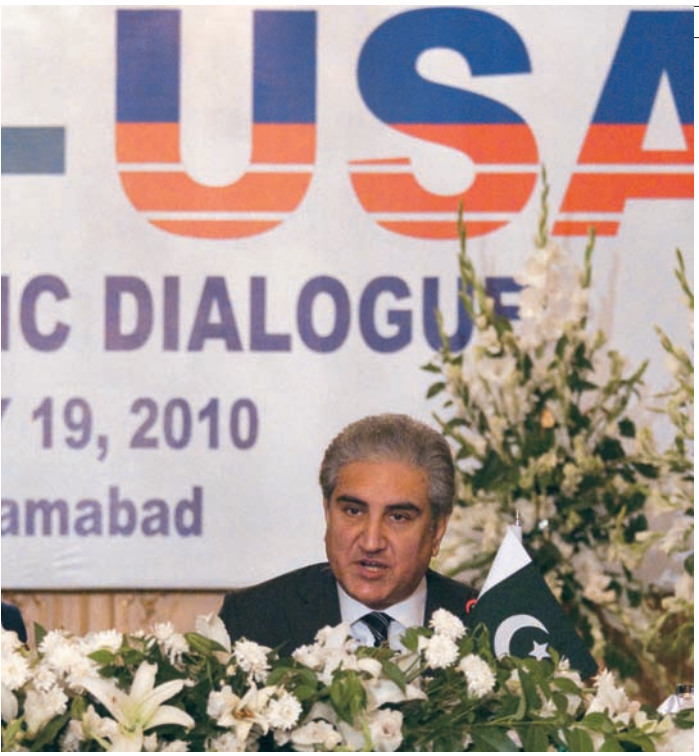
The Nature of Guerrilla Warfare

IN thinking about Afghanistan, it is essential to think about the nature of guerrilla warfare against an occupying force. The guerrilla lives in the country. He isn't going anywhere else, as he has nowhere to go. By contrast, the foreigner has a place to which he can return. This is the core weakness of the occupier and the strength of the guerrilla. The former can leave and in all likelihood, his nation will survive. The guerrilla can't. And having alternatives undermines the foreigner's will to fight regardless of the importance of the war to him.

The strategy of the guerrilla is to make the option to withdraw more attractive. In order to do this, his strategic goal is simply to survive and fight on whatever level he can. His patience is built into who he is and what he is fighting for. The occupier's patience is calculated against the cost of the occupation and its opportunity costs thus, while troops are committed in this country, what is happening elsewhere?

Tactically, the guerrilla survives by being elusive. He disperses in small groups. He operates in hostile terrain. He denies the enemy intelligence on his location and capabilities. He forms political alliances with civilians who provide him supplies and intelligence on the occupation forces and misleads the occupiers about his own location. The guerrilla uses this intelligence network to decline combat on the enemy's terms and to strike the enemy when he is least prepared. The guerrilla's goal is not to seize and hold ground but to survive, evade and strike, imposing casualties on the occupier. Above all, the guerrilla must never form a centre of gravity that, if struck, would lead to his defeat. He thus actively avoids anything that could be construed as a decisive contact.

The occupation force is normally a more conventional army. Its strength is superior firepower, resources and organization. If it knows where the guerrilla is and can strike



REUTERS

US Secretary of State Clinton with Pakistan Foreign Minister Qureshi: double dating

to Pakistan

continued reliance on Pakistan as its or achieving the goal of isolating al Qaeda

before the guerrilla can disperse, the occupying force will defeat the guerrilla. The occupier's problems are that his intelligence is normally inferior to that of the guerrillas; the guerrillas rarely mass in ways that permit decisive combat and normally can disperse faster than the occupier can pinpoint and deploy forces against them; and the guerrillas' superior tactical capabilities allow them to impose a constant low rate of casualties on the occupier. Indeed, the massive amount of resources the occupier requires and the inflexibility of a military institution not solely committed to the particular theatre of operations can actually work against the occupier by creating logistical vulnerabilities susceptible to guerrilla attacks and difficulty adapting at a rate sufficient to keep pace with the guerrilla. The occupation force will always win engagements, but that is never the measure of victory. If the guerrillas operate by doctrine, defeats in unplanned engagements will not undermine their basic goal of survival. While the occupier is not winning decisively, even while suffering only some casualties, he is losing. While the guerrilla is not losing decisively, even if suffering significant casualties, he is winning. Since the guerrilla is not going anywhere, he can afford far higher casualties than the occupier, who ultimately has the alternative of withdrawal.

The guerilla can afford far higher casualties than the occupier, who ultimately has the alternative of withdrawal.

The asymmetry of this warfare favours the guerrilla. This is particularly true when the strategic value of the war to the occupier is ambiguous, where the occupier does not possess sufficient force and patience to systematically overwhelm the guerrillas, and where either political or military constraints prevent operations against sanctuaries. This is a truth as relevant to David's insurgency against the Philistines as it is to the US experience in Vietnam or the Russian occupation of Afghanistan.

There has long been a myth about the unwillingness of Americans to absorb casualties for very long in guerrilla wars. In reality, the United States fought in Vietnam for at least seven years (depending on when you count the start and stop) and has now fought in Afghanistan for nine years. The idea that Americans can't endure the long war has no empirical basis. What the United States has difficulty with — along with imperial and colonial powers before it — is a war in which the ability to impose one's will on the enemy through force of arms is lacking and when it is not clear that the failure of previous years to win the war will be solved in the years ahead.

Far more relevant than casualties to whether Americans continue a war is the question of the conflict's strategic importance, for which the president is ultimately responsible. This divides into several parts. This first is whether the United States has the ability with available force to achieve its political goals through prosecuting the war (since all war is fought for some political goal, from regime change to policy shift) and whether the force the United States is willing to dedicate suffices to achieve these goals. To address this question in Afghanistan, we have to focus on the political goal.

The Evolution of the US' Political Goal in Afghanistan

WASHINGTON'S primary goal at the initiation of the conflict was to destroy or disrupt al Qaeda in Afghanistan to protect the US homeland from follow-on attacks to 9/11. But if Afghanistan were completely pacified,

REUTERS

(From left) F Ruggiero, Special Representative for Afghanistan-Pakistan, General Petraeus and President Obama in a strategy meeting: does Karzai have a future?

the threat of Islamist-fuelled transnational terrorism would remain at issue because it is no longer just an issue of a single organization — al Qaeda — but a series of fragmented groups conducting operations in Pakistan, Iraq, Yemen, North Africa, Somalia and elsewhere.

TODAY, al Qaeda is simply one manifestation of the threat of this transnational jihadist phenomenon. It is important to stop and consider al Qaeda — and the transnational jihadist phenomenon in general — in terms of guerrillas, and to think of the phenomenon as a guerrilla force in its own right operating by the very same rules on a global basis. Thus, where the Taliban apply guerrilla principles to Afghanistan, today's transnational jihadist applies them to the Islamic world and beyond. The transnational jihadists are not leaving and are not giving up. Like the Taliban in Afghanistan, they will decline combat against larger American forces and strike vulnerable targets when they can.

There are certainly more players and more complexity to the global phenomenon than in a localized insurgency. Many governments across North Africa, the Middle East and South Asia have no interest in seeing these movements set up shop and stir up unrest in their territory. And al Qaeda's devolution has seen frustrations as well as successes as it spreads. But the underlying principles of guerrilla warfare remain at issue. Whenever the Americans concentrate force in one area, al Qaeda disengages, disperses and regroups elsewhere and, perhaps more important, the ideology that underpins the phenomenon continues to exist. The threat will undoubtedly continue to evolve and face challenges but in the end, it will continue to exist along the lines of the guerrilla acting against the United States.

A president must take a more dispassionate view than his generals—whether victory is possible and also the value of the victory relative to the cost.

There is another important way in which the global guerrilla analogy is apt. STRATFOR has long held that Islamist-fuelled transnational terrorism does not represent a strategic, existential threat to the United States. While acts of transnational terrorism target civilians, they are not attacks — have not been and are not evolving into attacks — that endanger the territorial integrity of the United States or the way of life of the American people. They are dangerous and must be defended against, but transnational terrorism is and remains a tactical problem that for nearly a decade has been treated as if it were the pre-eminent strategic threat to the United States.

Nietzsche wrote that, "The most fundamental form of human stupidity is forgetting what we were trying to do in the first place." The stated US goal in Afghanistan was the

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destruction of al Qaeda. While al Qaeda as it existed in 2001 has certainly been disrupted and degraded, al Qaeda's evolution and migration means that disrupting and degrading it — to say nothing of destroying it — can no longer be achieved by waging a war in Afghanistan. The guerrilla does not rely on a single piece of real estate (in this case Afghanistan) but rather on his ability to move seamlessly across terrain to evade decisive combat in any specific location. Islamist-fuelled transnational terrorism is not centred on Afghanistan and does not need Afghanistan, so no matter how successful that war might be, it would make little difference in the larger fight against transnational jihadism.

Thus far, the United States has chosen to carry on fighting the war in Afghanistan. As al Qaeda has fled Afghanistan, the overall political goal for the United States in the country has evolved to include the creation of a democratic and uncorrupt Afghanistan. It is not clear that anyone knows how to do this, particularly given that most Afghans consider the ruling government of President Hamid Karzai — with which the United States is allied — as the heart of the corruption problem, and beyond Kabul most Afghans do not regard their way of making political and social arrangements to be corrupt.

SIMPLY withdrawing from Afghanistan carries its own strategic and political costs, however. The strategic problem is that simply terminating the war after nine years would destabilize the Islamic world. The United States has managed to block al Qaeda's goal of triggering a series of uprisings against existing regimes and replacing them with jihadist regimes. It did this by displaying a willingness to intervene where necessary. Of course, the idea that US intervention destabilized the region raises the question of what regional stability would look like had it not intervened. The danger of withdrawal is that the network of relationships the United States created and imposed at the regime level could unravel if it withdrew. America would be seen as having lost the war, the prestige of radical Islamists and thereby the foundation of the ideology that underpins their movement would surge, and this could destabilize regimes and undermine American interests.

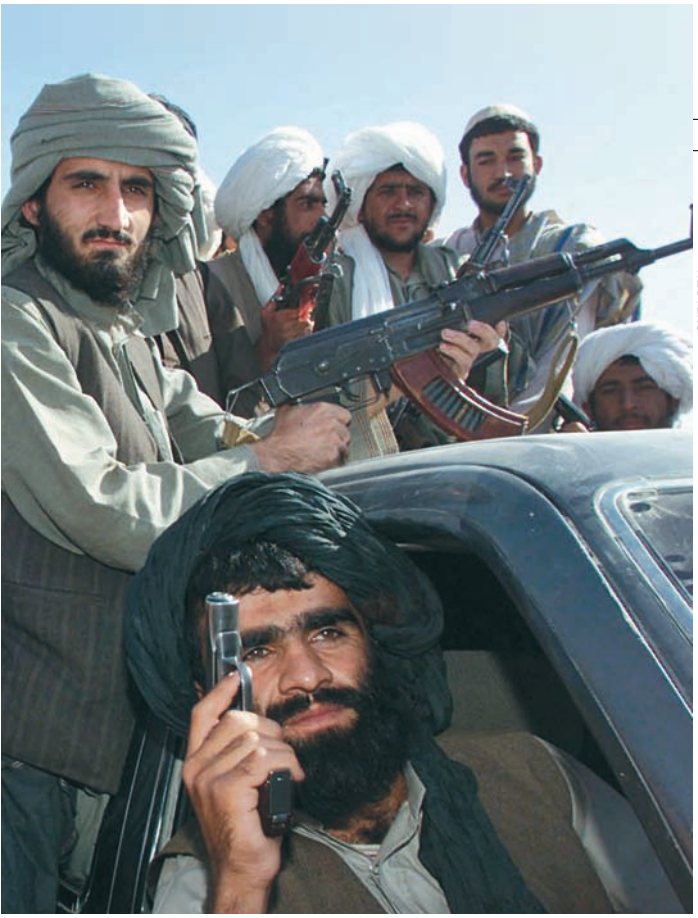
The political problem is domestic. Obama's approval rating now stands at 42 percent. This is not unprecedented, but it means he is politically weak. One of the charges against him, fair or not, is that he is inherently anti-war by background and so not fully committed to the war effort. Where a Republican would face charges of being a warmonger, which would make withdrawal easier, Obama faces charges of being too soft. Since a President must maintain political support to be effective, withdrawal becomes even harder. Therefore, strategic

The Pakistani-Taliban relationship, a liability for the US, now becomes an advantage for Washington because it creates a trusted channel for meaningful communication with the Taliban.

analysis aside, the President is not going to order a complete withdrawal of all combat forces any time soon — the national (and international) political alignment won't support such a step. At the same time, remaining in Afghanistan is unlikely to achieve any goal and leaves potential rivals like China and Russia freer rein.

The American Solution

THE American solution, one that we suspect is already under way, is the Pakistanization of the war. By this, we do not mean extending the war into Pakistan but rather extending Pakistan into Afghanistan. The Taliban phenomenon has extended into Pakistan in ways that seriously complicate Pakistani efforts to regain their bearing in Afghanistan. It has created a major security problem for Islamabad, which, coupled with the severe deterioration of the country's economy and now the floods, has weakened the Pakistanis' ability to manage Afghanistan. In other words, the moment that the Pakistanis have been waiting for — American agreement and support for the Pakistanization of



REUTERS

the war — has come at a time when the Pakistanis are not in an ideal position to capitalize on it.

In the past, the United States has endeavoured to keep the Taliban in Afghanistan and the regime in Pakistan separate. (The Taliban movements in Afghanistan and Pakistan are not one and the same.) Washington has not succeeded in this regard, with the Pakistanis continuing to hedge their bets and maintain a relationship across the border. Still, US opposition has been the single greatest impediment to Pakistan's consolidation of the Taliban in Afghanistan, and abandoning this opposition leaves important avenues open for Islamabad.

The Pakistani relationship to the Taliban, which was a liability for the United States in the past, now becomes an advantage for Washington because it creates a trusted channel for meaningful communication with the Taliban. Logic suggests this channel is quite active now.

The Vietnam War ended with the Paris peace talks. Those formal talks were not where the real bargaining took place but rather where the results were ultimately confirmed. If talks are under way, a similar venue for the formal manifestation of the talks is needed — and Islamabad is as good a place as any.

PAKISTAN is an American ally which the United States needs, both to balance growing Chinese influence in and partnership with Pakistan, and to contain India. Pakistan needs the United States for the same reason. Meanwhile, the Taliban want to run Afghanistan. The United States has no strong national interest in how Afghanistan is run so long as it does not support and espouse transnational jihadism. But it needs its withdrawal to take place in a manner that strengthens its influence rather than weakens it, and Pakistan can provide the cover for turning a retreat into a negotiated settlement.

Pakistan has every reason to play this role. It needs the United States over the long term to balance against India. It must have a stable or relatively stable Afghanistan to secure its western frontier. It needs an end to US forays into Pakistan that are destabilizing the regime. And playing this role would enhance Pakistan's status in the Islamic world, something the United States could benefit from, too. We suspect that all sides are moving toward this end.

The United States isn't going to defeat the Taliban. The original goal of the war is irrelevant, and the current goal is rather difficult to take seriously. Even a victory, whatever that would look like, would make little difference in the fight against transnational jihad, but a defeat could harm US interests. Therefore, the United States needs a withdrawal that is not a defeat. Such a strategic shift is not without profound political complexity and difficulties. But the disparity between — and increasingly, the incompatibility of — the struggle with transnational terrorism and the war effort geographically rooted in Afghanistan is only becoming more apparent — even to the American public. g

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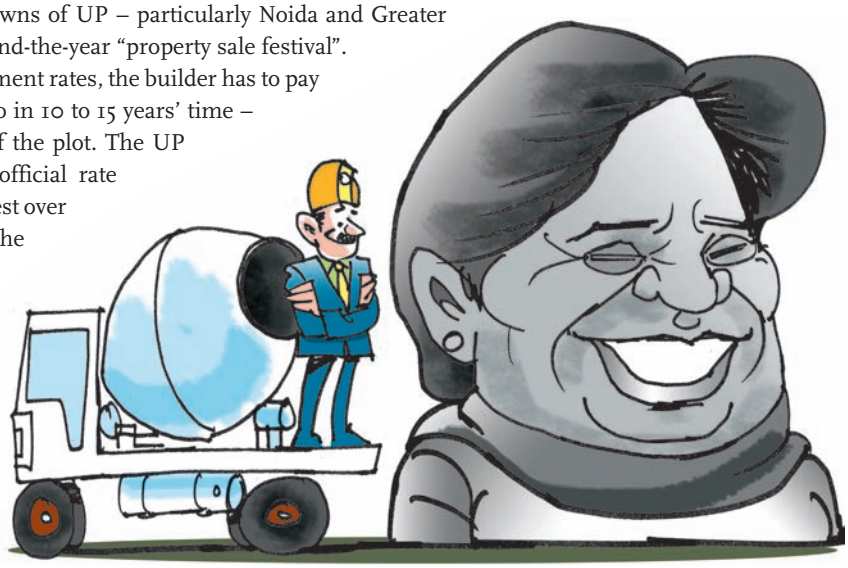
UP's 'property festival'

Builders cough up 'unofficial' sums

UTTAR Pradesh should have been the richest state in the country, riding on the boom in the real estate industry. Going by the barrage of text messages flooding mobiles, and the advertisements in newspapers, on TV and FM, the towns of UP – particularly Noida and Greater Noida – appear to be celebrating a round-the-year "property sale festival".

Yet, it is not so. According to government rates, the builder has to pay Rs 800-1500 per square foot – that too in 10 to 15 years' time – depending on the size and location of the plot. The UP government gets 10 percent of the official rate upfront while the builder can pay the rest over a decade or so. The flip side is that the builder has to pay up Rs 11,000-15,000 per square foot immediately as unofficial peripheral charges. This "unofficial" system also stipulates that 40 percent of the total deal has to be paid upfront and the remainder after the formal letter of allotment. Chief Minister Mayawati, the coloniser of UP, knows well how to play this game.



Adarsh not Chavan's nemesis

shifted loyalty from patel to diggy raja

IF you think Ashok Chavan, the former Chief Minister of Maharashtra, lost his job because of the Adarsh Society scam, you are wide off the mark. He could have survived the scandal worth a few crores if he had not commited a political gaffe by shifting loyalty from one big boss to another in the All-India Congress Committee (AICC). Pawns shifting loyalty is not something that is forgiven by the political masters.

Chavan was a known acolyte of AICC leader Ahmed Patel, who is also political adviser to Sonia Gandhi. But, in an effort to cosy up to the emerging party chieftain, Rahul Gandhi, he shifted allegiance to Digvijay Singh, the powerful General Secretary of the party who has the eyes and ears of the young leader. Unfortunately, that didn't go down well with the bosses in Delhi. And all they needed was the Adarsh Society scam to cut Chavan down to size.

Patel the perfectionist

inspects talkatora ahead of plenary session

WINTER had begun making inroads into Delhi but at the Talkatora stadium, the youngsters of the Congress party were sweating under the heat of floodlights and the scrutiny of their big bosses around the midnight of November 1. The Congress' plenary session was to be held the next day and preparations were on in full swing. Moti Lal Vora, Janardan Dwivedi, Oscar Fernandes, Jagdish Tytler, Jai Prakash Agarwal and Ahmed Patel were all present to give the final touches.

Patel meticulously made rounds of the kitchen, press room, VIP rooms and the main hall, ironing out even minute flaws. Checking the route Sonia Gandhi would take to unfurl the party flag, he saw an open sewer hole near the dais and barked orders to cover it.

ILLUSTRATIONS: ARUNA

By the time he left, it was already 1.30 am but he informed everyone he would be back in a few hours to make a final inspection. Patel takes no chances and his personal touch delights the Congress' functionaries no end. Kiran Walia and Rajesh Lilothia, the young MLAs from Delhi, were watching attentively from the sidelines, learning how the big bosses work.

Lucknow

Kalmadi blames PR guys

sahara shree shown on tv

IN a recent review of what went wrong at the CWG, former Games Committee boss Suresh Kalmadi blamed the failure of the PR machine rather than the rampant corruption. One reason was that Kalmadi received a call from 10, Janpath expressing displeasure that Subrata "Saharashree" Roy of Sahara had been prominently shown on TV with the guests of honour during the gala opening. "Saharashree" is not exactly popular with Congress chief Sonia Gandhi because of his association with Amar Singh and Mulayam Singh Yadav.

Kalmadi blamed the two main PR advisers, hired for the occasion, who were instructing Doordarshan to focus cameras on certain personalities. One was Rajiv Desai, formerly of Hill & Knowlton and now with Comma Advertising, who was once part of the Rajiv Gandhi camp. But the main person on whose advice the TV coverage honed in on Saharashree is believed to be Harinder Singh, the chief honcho at Percept who has been media adviser to the Sahara group for a long time. g

AS the Indian National Congress – India's Grand Old Party – celebrates its 125th anniversary, it is difficult to miss the juxtaposition of two striking yet contrasting scenarios from the past and present: The party leaders of 1947 such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, C Rajagopalachari and Rajendra Prasad as against those of 2010, namely, Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, Pranab Mukherjee, AK Antony, Digvijay Singh, SM Krishna, Anand Sharma, Ghulam Nabi Azad, Salman Khursheed and so on.

Where the former group worked to free India, the latter, sadly, has bound the nation in chains. Founder Allan Octavian Hume could never have imagined that an organization he spearheaded along with Dadabhai Naoroji, Rajendra Lal Mitra, Ramgopal Ghose and Surendra Nath Banerjee to give voice to the aspirations of India's huddled masses and incipient entrepreneurs against the economic drain of the Raj would one day itself be viewed as Raj redux.

Romesh Chunder Dutt, a distinguished economic historian who became party president in 1899, tracked the decline of India as one of the world's agricultural and industrial powerhouses under British manipulation. He wrote: "The East India Company and the British Parliament, following the selfish commercial policy of a hundred years ago, discouraged Indian manufacturers in the early years of British rule in order to encourage the rising manufacturers of England. Their fixed policy, pursued during the last decades of the 19th century, was to make India subservient to the industries of Great Britain, and to make the Indian people grow raw produce in order to supply material for the looms and manufacturers of Great Britain."

But, even as the nation broke these fetters, thanks largely to the valiant efforts of the Congress party, history now seems to be in ironic repetition of itself. British India has been replaced with a veritable Multinational India Inc. The colours, faces and patterns might have changed, but the dynamics of the old game remain the same. Rural India still lives in dread of the landgrabbers.

As for the party, its current state hardly augurs well for its future. On November 2, the Congress party's preliminary session elected Sonia Gandhi as its president and authorized her to appoint working committee members. For veteran observers, it was an utterly transparent game. Lightweights like Girija Vyas, Rashid Alvi, Meenakshi Natarajan and Ramesh Chennithala took the lead in endorsing Sonia and spouting paeans of praise while senior members – the more credible faces of the party – looked on.

Yet, nobody was fooled. The only entity that runs the party with unstinting support from the power-brokers is the Sonia-Rahul powerhouse. But how long can the mother-son combo keep fetching votes for the unknown faces in the party? Any party that belittles its second-rung leadership cannot be successful. Leaders are not made in a day. They need a ready, willing and trained reservoir of talent to ensure not just the survival of the Nehru-Gandhi scions but also the edifice of the party.

The Opposition parties may seem disunited, jaded and effete at the moment. But there is one aspect of them that the managers and top leaders of the Congress can ignore only at their own peril: There are at least 20 leaders emerging independently who are capable of achieving national status at the right time. Can this be said of the Congress just now?

The lessons are clear: change c

Is Sonia Gandhi's party living in the glorious past without a future?

by **Vijay Sanghvi**

REFLECTING on the Indian National Congress as it prepares to mark the 125th anniversary of its founding, a Rolls-Royce joke comes to mind. A wealthy man bought a Rolls-Royce and drove it away from the showroom. After 10 km, the car stalled. He summoned the engineers. After inspecting the car, they said, "Sorry, sir, there is no engine." Amazed, he asked, "Then how did it run this far?"

"On the company's reputation, sir."

The Congress party too has come this far on its reputation. But it gets stalled on and off, often at election time, since the engine is missing. However reputed and expert the driver, he just cannot make the vehicle move sans an engine. A good driver with a glorious past is not enough.

Congress members are unwilling to shed their belief that a member of the "First Family" installed in the driving seat can make the party reach its desired destination of power. The party has become identified with an individual family rather than banking on a programme or innovative ideas that can spark the imagination of the masses. Its members are yet to learn that no

SHARAD SAXSENA

e or perish

individual, no matter his or her charisma, can work magic unless the individual is identified with an idea that the masses embrace. Individuals can lead the party only when a worthy idea provides the locomotion.

Gandhi infused life in the freedom struggle by turning the Congress party from a debating society into an organization of the masses. He proffered the idea that freedom was the final objective of their lives and the people took it up. Next, Nehru provided the idea that it was in the hands of the people to build a new India and the population was inspired. Indira Gandhi promised the poor two square meals a day as their right and they identified with her, trouncing the mighty opposition in the March 1971 election.

Ironically, the massive mandate of 1971 became the major source of the problems afflicting the party today. It led to Indira's belief that she alone was the invincible leader. The electoral debacle of March 1977 did not alter this belief because she had delivered yet another blow to the party by removing most of the leaders around her who had consolidated bases among the people of their regions. She did not want a challenge to her leadership within the party. Aware that nine Chief Ministers were responsible for her victory over Morarji Desai in January 1966, she also knew they were powerful elements within the party as they enjoyed majority in their legislature parties. "If nine can make, they can also unmake me," she once said privately.

Structure of Nominations

Perhaps this insecurity was responsible for the introduction of the nominated structure of the party. Every post or position was granted at her pleasure and withdrawn at her displeasure.

Indira also had her way in installing

Chief Ministers who did not enjoy a majority in their legislature parties. In March 1972, Gujarat dissident leader Chimanbhai Patel challenged Chief Minister Ghanshyam Oza, nominated by her, to name five legislators out of 112 MLAs. Oza could not accept the challenge. Jagjivan Ram derisively called these nominated CMs "the drafted Chief Ministers".

The nominations for party posts imposed a situation in which Indira did not need the party as a political apparatus with internal democracy, free debate and merit-based upward mobility. Even two-way communication was gradually replaced by diktats.

IT continues today with the leader being inaccessible not only to the rank and file but also to second- and third-rung leaders beyond the cordon of advisers. Functionaries who have held some office or other for 30 years find it difficult to secure an audience.

Jaideep Sinha Baria, Congressman from Godhra, Gujarat, wrote to Indira that the party defeat in Assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka in January 1983 was mainly due to the end of free debate in all forums. Even in the Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP), there was no scope left for debate. Party meetings were turned into mere rituals with inaugural and valedictory addresses by the leader. Hence, the leader remained unaware of ground realities and public perception of the party and its programmes.

But the stinging message did not prompt Indira to open the doors of the party fora for free and meaningful debate. Even within the Congress Working Committee (CWC), debate was reduced to authorization of the party chief's capacity to take decisions. This continues: at the last CWC meeting, party chief Sonia Gandhi was authorized to name 12 members to it instead of holding an election as the party Constitution stipulates. The election would have given the thousands of AICC members an opportunity to express their opinion through a ballot. Instead, the task of shortlisting 12 names was assigned to a set of advisers.

Then there's the situation stemming from the fact that some families have held safe constituencies and continue to push their children's claims to succession. This prevents meritorious aspirants from rising within the party. It also results in diverting loyalty to these families or safely ensconced leaders rather than to the party among the second rung. Palace intrigues flourish as aides joust to grab the maximum numbers. This factor kept Rajiv Gandhi from evolving an effective strategy to meet the opposition challenge in Parliament over charges of corruption in defence deals in 1987.

Charity is not empowerment

If the structure is flawed, so are the party's programmes. Devised to make the poor depend on state charity rather than empowerment to escape poverty, inequality and deprivation, the programmes amount to little more than

throwing crumbs. They rouse the expectation of more largesse without any gratitude for what, however indifferently, has already been delivered. An even more serious flaw is that the party rank and file do not derive political mileage because they are waiting on leaders to catch their eye rather than working in the field. Earlier, a patron-

'Off with his head'

THE first victim of Indira Gandhi's new policy of nominations was Jagjivan Ram. He was replaced as party chief immediately after the 1971 election because he had remarked a day before the final tally was known that he was not a sleeping president. He was responding to the media's questions on the party's strategy in case it did not gain a clear majority. Within a week, he was replaced by a little-known D Sanjivaiya who was picked up from Andhra Pradesh.

Yet, only 20 months earlier, in June 1969, Indira had proposed his name as the Congress candidate in the presidential election on the death of Zakir Hussain. The Parliamentary board rejected Jagjivan Ram's candidature as he had not filed tax returns for years. She forgave him and made him party chief a day after the Parliament censure.

In contrast to her easing out of Jagjivan Ram, Nehru had to face seven sessions of the All-India Congress Committee (AICC) in 1951 when he wanted to remove Purushottam Das Tandon. He achieved it with a show of moral indignation and a threat to step down as Prime Minister. Nevertheless, he allowed the democracy within the party full play.

Indira (left) and Sonia on the stump: first family in the driving seat

age system existed in the party that helped workers mobilize votes. A leader would attend to what workers in the field were saying and seek redressal of problems. In turn, the worker delivered votes because he was in a position to show his clout with the leader. The practice of nominations dealt a lethal blow to the patronage system too.

In 1987, the Rajiv Gandhi government launched a major initiative to provide relief to people caught in severe scarcity. But the Congress could not reap political benefits from it and was relegated to the opposition benches in the December 1989 election. The main reason for failure was the absence of workers to exert political pressure on the bureaucracy to deliver what the government had promised by way of a few thousand crore rupees for relief operations.

The Congress' managers credit Sonia for the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) and its political benefits to the party in the 2009 election. But the programme is essentially charity and the absence of workers from sites hampers political dividends. The Congress bettered its performance in 2009 only because its opponents conceived the wrong approach. The BJP's projection of LK Advani as a decisive leader was a godsend for the Congress because the "decisive leader" had bungled with the "Shining India" campaign in the previous election. If NREGS played a role, why did the Congress do better in urban areas? Rather than analysing this, the party simply became complacent.

The economic reforms programme is perceived as meant for the wealthy by the masses. But the Congress-led government is pursuing it with vigour while the party talks of the *aam aadmi*.

Growing Social Awareness and Aspirations

What does the Congress stand for? This is a question that baffles voters on the margins of society. The Assembly poll defeats in several States following the general election tell a tale about this. Earlier, the Congress was a representative political apparatus for all without a specific social vote bloc. Education and media expansion have created awareness among all classes. The improved economic conditions have spawned new aspirations and also a hunger for a legitimate share in political power. However, the emerging classes find no space in the Congress leadership structure that is already packed with the old traditionalist and urban classes. So it is natural for them to seek new pastures – being provided by the regional parties espousing their cause. The growth of regional parties spelt the shrinking of the social and geographical reach of the Congress. The party lacks a leader who wields influence among the emerging classes.

The Congress is seeking solutions to its problems without first tackling the social awareness that caused them in the first place. Instead of evolving with the times and new aspirations, it clings to the old concept of family rule as a mascot without realizing that today's youth has escaped the grip of feudal perceptions. The party urgently needs an idea that can propel it for its run on reputation is over. Changing drivers is not the solution. The anniversary celebrations should begin and end with introspection directed at devising a powerful engine. g

Ironically, the massive mandate of 1971 became the source of the problems afflicting the party today: Indira's belief that she alone was the invincible leader.

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Seven blunders of I

The squandering of hard-won military victories, good faith bordering on naivete, and po

by **Major General Mrinal Suman**

HISTORICAL mistakes, because they cannot be undone, have a complex snowballing effect on a nation's future. The following historical blunders, recounted chronologically, changed the course of independent India's history and cast a shadow over its future. Instances of the inadequacy of India's decision-making apparatus and the leadership's lack of vision, they will haunt India for generations.

The Kashmir Mess

THERE can be no better example of shooting oneself in the foot than the clumsy handling of the Kashmir issue. In 1947, Hari Singh was the reigning monarch of Jammu and Kashmir. Vacillating on the decision to join the Indian Dominion, he faced an invasion by tribal marauders backed by the Pakistani Army in October of that year. He sought help from New Delhi and agreed to accede to India. Indian forces then blunted the invasion and re-conquered vast areas.

First, India erred by not insisting on unequivocal accession and granting special status through Article 380 of the Constitution. Second, on the verge of evicting all invaders and recapturing the entire state, India halted operations on January 1, 1949 and appealed to the Security Council. It is the only case in history when a nation on the threshold of complete victory has voluntarily forsaken it in the misplaced hope of winning the admiration of the global community. Third, the Indian leadership made an unconstitutional offer of plebiscite in the UN.

India and Pakistan have since had wars and skirmishes with no solution in sight. Worse, the local politicians are holding India to ransom by playing the Pakistan card.

Ignoring the Chinese Threat and Neglecting the Military

MEMORIES of 1962 will always trouble the Indian psyche. A nation of India's size had lulled itself into believing that its protestations and platitudes of peaceful coexistence would be reciprocated by the world. Its armed forces were neglected, the intelligence apparatus was rusted and foreign policy was in a shambles. Signs of China's aggressive intentions were discernible for years but the Indian leadership fondly hoped the problem would resolve itself. When China struck, India was caught unprepared. Troops were rushed to snowbound areas with summer clothing and outdated rifles. Despite numerous sagas of gallantry, the nation was forced on its knees.

1962 China war and Mrs Gandhi with Bhutto after 1971 Indo-Pak war (right): nothing learned from defeat or victory

The Tashkent Agreement and Return of Haji Pir Pass

FOLLOWING the ceasefire after the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965, a Russia-sponsored agreement was signed between India and Pakistan in Tashkent on January 10, 1966. India agreed to return the strategic Haji Pir pass to Pakistan which it had captured in August 1965 at huge human cost. The pass connects Poonch and Uri sectors in Jammu and Kashmir via a route of 15 km whereas the alternative entails travelling over 200 km. India got nothing in return except an undertaking by Pakistan to abjure war, which meant little since Pakistan had no intention of honouring it. In addition to the loss of a direct Poonch-Uri link, the pass is being used by Pakistan to infiltrate terrorists into India. The inability to resist Russian pressure was a manifestation of the shortcomings of Indian foreign policy and leadership.

The Simla Agreement

WITH the fall of Dhaka on December 16, 1971, India had scored a decisive victory over Pakistan. Over 96,000 Pakistani soldiers were taken prisoner. An agreement was signed between the two countries on July 2, 1972, at Shimla (then Simla). Both countries agreed to exchange all PoWs, respect the line of control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir, and refrain from use of threat or force. Additionally, Pakistani PM ZA Bhutto gave a solemn verbal undertaking to accept the

i India

ıd political compulsions have enfeebled India

LoC as the de facto border.

India released all the PoWs but Pakistan returned only 617 Indian PoWs and 54 are still languishing in Pakistani jails. India failed to use the 96,000 Pakistani PoWs to discipline Pakistan. Again, Pakistan never intended to abide by its promises, written or verbal. The fruits of a hard-won victory on the battlefield were frittered away at the negotiating table.

The Nuclear Muddle

SUBSEQUENT to China's nuclear test at Lop Nor in 1964, India showed rare courage in carrying out its first explosion on May 18, 1974, at Pokharan. Besides the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, India was the only nation to prove its nuclear capability. But ecstatic Indians had not contended with their government's penchant for squandering hard-earned gains. Instead of asserting its status as a nuclear power and demanding recognition, India turned apologetic and tried to convince the world that it had no nuclear ambitions. Strangely, it termed the Pokharan test a "peaceful nuclear explosion" – a term unheard-of till then.

Criticism and sanctions were expected and must have been factored in beforehand. A few assertive follow-on tests would have forced the world to accept India as a member of the nuclear club but India self-imposed a moratorium on further testing. India lost the advantages provided by its scientists. It suffered sanctions and also failed to gain recognition as a nuclear power.

The Kandahar Hijack

THE hijacking of an Indian Airlines aircraft to Kandahar by Pakistani terrorists in December 1999 will rile Indians for long. The eight-day ordeal ended when the National Security Adviser announced the release of the three Kashmiri militants, including Maulana Masood Azhar, demanded in return for the hostages. Sadly, the Prime Minister claimed credit for forcing the hijackers' climbdown on their demands. Worse, the External Affairs Minister accompanied the released militants to Kandahar as if seeing off guests.

Poor crisis-management skills and complacency in security matters allowed the hijackers to take off from Amritsar airport after a 39-minute halt for refuelling, thereby letting the situation out of control. India's vaunted decision-making apparatus was paralysed by a bunch of motivated fanatics. India earned the tag of a soft nation which will be very difficult to shed.

Illegal Immigration and Passage of IMDT Act

IT is standard practice all over the world for the burden of proving bona fide citizenship to fall on the accused. It is the same in India under the Foreigners Act of 1946 but political expediency forced an exception to be made for Assam. In a shortsighted move, the Illegal Migrants – Determination by Tribunals (IMDT) Act of 1984 was passed for Assam. It shifted the onus of proving the illegal status of a suspected immigrant to the accuser, which is virtually impossible. Whenever repeal of the Act was sought, the Congress, Left Front and United Minorities Front resisted it. Worse, any protest against the Act was dubbed "anti-minority", imparting a communal colour to a national security issue. The government's "pardon" of all Bangladeshis who had entered before 1985 was another unconstitutional act that aggravated the problem.

On July 13, 2005, more than 20 years after enactment, the Act was struck down as unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. But immense damage had already been done to the demography of Assam and the local people had been reduced to minority status in certain districts. No party can hope to come to power without the support of illegal immigrants. About 30 Islamic groups are thriving in the area to further Islamist and pan-Bangladesh agenda.

Is India Wiser Today?

Two features are common to all these blunders. First, the decisions were taken by the political leadership and the bureaucracy. The military leadership was neither taken into confidence nor consulted. It was deliberately kept out of the decision-making loop. Second, no political leader or bureaucrat was ever held accountable for their blunders. On the contrary, every bureaucrat involved made it to the higher grades and even secured lucrative post-retirement appointments. Today, they masquerade as foreign policy experts on TV.

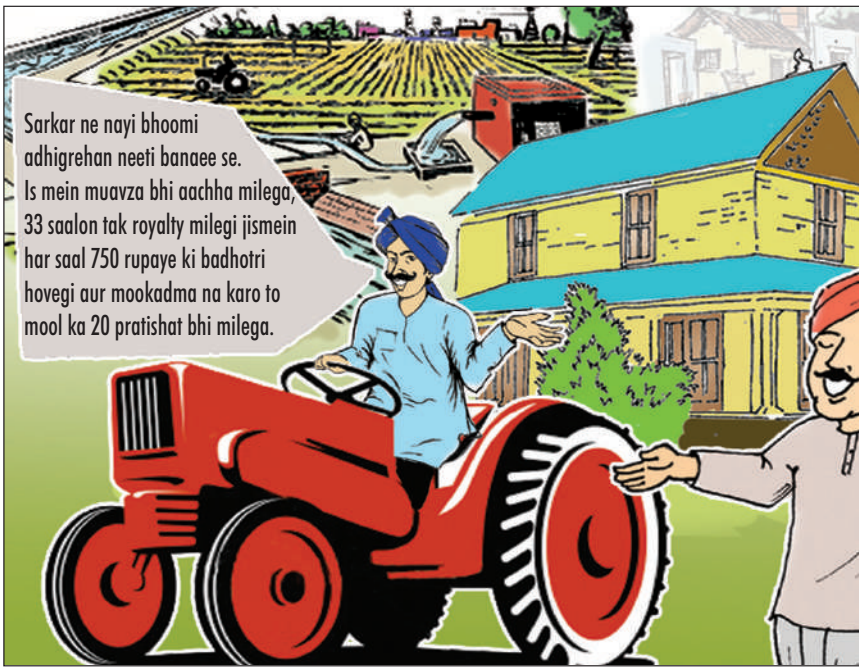
India has learnt no lessons. The military leadership is still kept out of the decision-making apparatus. g

Haryana's new land acquisi t

Haryana's new land acquisition (rehabilitation and resettlement) policy takes full care of the rights of landowners while ushering in fast industrial growth and infrastructure development. It offers the landowners, for the first time, a high minimum floor rate (MFR) while keeping the doors open to pay for the acquired land at the market rates.

The government for the first time has framed rules in the matter of allotment of residential or commercial plots in lieu of the acquired land or jobs which the land owners are entitled under the new policy. There is no scope for discretion or mischief at any level. The artisans and other landless that depend on land are to be provided free education at the state expenses to gain or upgrade their skills.

This policy, a cynosure of everyone, provides 'no litigation bonus' of 20 per cent of the basic rate of land to those who do not litigate in the courts. Indeed a step forward for an inclusive growth!


Sarkar ne nayi bhoomi adhigrehan neeti banaee se. Is mein muavza bhi aachha milega, 33 saalon tak royalty milegi jismein har saal 750 rupaye ki badhotri hovegi aur mookadma na karo to mool ka 20 pratishat bhi milega.

Haryana has been described as a role model for the rest of the country. Top leaders-UPA President Mrs Sonia Gandhi, Prime Minster Dr Manmohan Singh and Congress General Secretary, Rahul Gandhi have appreciated the policy.

Mrs Gandhi appreciating said, "Farmers must be provided adequate compensation and an alternative occupation. Some states like Haryana have progressive legislation in this regard and other states should emulate it."

As promised, the chief minister, Bhupinder Singh Hooda revisited the land acquisition policy and announced major amendments. "The revised land acquisition (rehabilitation and resettlement) policy of Haryana would usher in more prosperity for the farming community," declared Hooda.

The new policy has been welcomed by the farmers and land owners. An elated farmer, Rameshwar of Chamariya village in Rohtak, says, "The government has increased compensation for the acquired land which was earlier maximum Rs 22 lakh per acre to Rs 45 lakh per acre. Even the annual royalty has been increased from Rs 15,000 per acre to Rs 21,000 per acre."

Satbir Singh of Fatehabad who owns land, proposed to be acquired for the nuclear power plant, opines, "Till now, most of the farmers were hesitant in giving their agriculture land for the proposed plant, but the new floor rates have given them a reason to rethink."

Ashok Rathee of Jhajjar says, "Both, me and my wife are working and do not have time to look after our land. From this new land acquisition policy, we can get compensation in crores for our seven acre land which is coming under acquisition. We can invest this money."

Salient features:

The new policy would be implemented retrospectively from September 7, 2010. Under the second revision of its policy, the state has now been divided into five zonal brackets, instead of three under the old policy, for the purpose of computing the MFR.

For land situated within the notified limits of Gurgaon Municipal Corporation, the new MFR has been fixed at Rs 72 lakh per acre, including Rs 8 lakh as 'no litigation incentive'.

For land situated within the notified limits of Faridabad and Panchkula Municipal Corporations; areas forming part of the Development Plans of Gurgaon-Manesar Urban Complex (excluding the areas falling within the limits of Municipal Corporation Gurgaon) Sohna, and Sonipat-Kundli Urban Complex, the MFR has been fixed at Rs 54 lakh per acre, including Rs 6 lakh as 'no litigation incentive'.

The areas situated within the Development Plans of Bahadurgarh, Rohtak, Rewari, Dharuhera, Bawal and Panipat towns at Rs 45 lakh per acre, including Rs 5 lakh as 'no litigation incentive'.

In the rest of the National Capital Region, areas situated outside the limits of Panchkula Municipal Corporation in Panchkula district, and land situated within the Development Plans of all other district headquarters outside the NCR, the MFR has been fixed at Rs 36 lakh per acre, including Rs 4 lakh as 'no litigation incentive'. And in the remaining parts of the state, the MFR is Rs 21.6 lakh per acre, including Rs 2.4 lakh as incentive.

As per the earlier policy, the floor rates in the state were Rs 22 lakh, Rs 16 lakh and Rs 8 lakh respectively for the three zones which would now be Rs 72 lakh, Rs 54 lakh, Rs 45 lakh, Rs 36 lakh and Rs 21.60 lakh respectively for five zones including the 'no litigation incentive'.

No litigation incentive

A unique feature added to the policy is the 'no litigation incentive' for farmers which will guarantee them a 20 percent higher price than the MFR if they undertake not to go in for litigation.

It would be given to such landowners who execute an agreement not to resort to any litigation on acquisition and the amount of compensation, and agree to the amount awarded by the Land Acquisition Collector (LAC). The incentive, equal to 20 per cent of the basic rate of land (excluding the solatium and interest) awarded by the LAC, would be paid at the time of execution of the agreement.

Annuity and annual increase up

Now, the landowners would be paid annuity amount of Rs 21,000 per acre per annum which will be increased Rs 750

i tion policy: A role model

Ya to ghanee aachhi baat se bhai...
Is se gaavan main bhi vikas hovega,
Bunyaadi suvidhaon ke kaam hovenge
Mhare to vaare nyaare ho jange!!!

annually for a period of 33 years. The amount to be paid over 33 years works out to Rs 10,89,000 per acre. Earlier, the annuity amount was Rs 15,000 per acre per annum with annual increase of Rs 500.

The annuity for acquisition of land for the private companies/initiatives will be Rs 42,000 per acre per annum with an annual increase of Rs 1,500. The additional amount to be paid as annuity over 33 years works out to Rs 21,78,000 per acre.

Where any government department resorted to acquisition of self-occupied residential houses for unavoidable reasons, the owners would be entitled to assured allotment of residential plots. These plots will be carved out in close vicinity of an affected village. The landowners, whose land is acquired, will be given bigger size plots in case one's residential property is acquired. Under the revised policy, for the first time, plots up to 450 sq yards will be allotted against acquisition of built-up self-occupied residential houses.

Plots to oustees to cost less

In case of HUDA and HSIIDC, these plots will be priced 20 per cent lower than the nodal price for general public, and cost-based in other cases. Under the revised Rehabilitation and Resettlement policy, the residential plots in this case will be allotted as per laid down scale.

The rates of residential plots reserved for allotment to land oustees would be 20 per cent lower than the nodal price worked out for the general public at the time of first floatation.

Regarding reservation and allotment of commercial/industrial sites, where the entire holding/land of a landowner is acquired by the government for HUDA, HSIIDC and HSAMB, rendering him landless, developed commercial/ industrial sites would be reserved and allotted to such land oustees, subject to the acquired land being a minimum of one acre. The commercial/ industrial sites would be reserved and allotted in addition to the residential plots for land oustees.

Better deal for landless & artisans

Special focus will be on up -gradation of skills of these people/their dependents so as to improve their employability in the organized sector.

Provision of government jobs

In cases where more than 75 per cent of land, subject to a minimum of two acres or above, was acquired for a public purpose other than that for HUDA/HSIIDC/HSAMB, one dependent from the land-owning family would be provided a job in the state government/its organisations in Group 'C' or Group 'D' subject to fulfilment of the qualifications prescribed for such job.

"The revised land acquisition rehabilitation and resettlement policy of Haryana would usher in more prosperity for the farming community."

-Bhupinder Singh Hooda
Chief Minister, Haryana

Taking into account the fact that some persons may indulge in large-scale division of their holdings to acquire title to government jobs in this process, the entitlement of dependants would be based on the revenue records of four years before the date of issue of notification under Section 4 or a corresponding provision in other statutes.

In case the landowner has installed one or more tubewells with an electricity connection sanctioned on agricultural tariff, and portion of the land whereupon such tubewell is installed is acquired, he would be entitled to alternate tubewell connection(s) in this category either on the tubewell already installed in his unacquired land or over the agricultural land that he may purchase elsewhere in the state within a period of two years of the Award.

In another pro-farmer decision, the State Government has decided to exempt the affected farmers from the stamp duty for purchase of land in the state. If a landowner, whose land is acquired, purchases alternate agricultural land within a period of two years in the state; he would be exempted from stamp duty and registration charges. The exemption would be given only up to the amount awarded.

Policy applicable to any Central Government acquisition

This revised policy shall also be applicable for any land acquisition for the Central Government/ its public sector undertakings, the NHAI/Railways in Haryana. An undertaking to this effect would be obtained in advance from such indenting agencies before initiating any land acquisition proceedings. The amount of annuity policy will be charged upfront from such agencies in addition to the compensation paid to the landowners.

In another major farmer-friendly initiative, the State Government has decided to absolve those farmers whose land was acquired by the Government, from capital gain tax purview. Capital gain tax is payable on the compensation amount paid in respect of land acquired within 8 kms of municipal limits with 1981 as the base year for arriving at the capital gains. Since the taxation is a Central Government subject, the State Government has decided to approach the Government of India for exempting the compensation amount from the purview of capital gain tax in cases where the land is either Dadalahi or acquired in the name of the father or the existing land owner for a period of more than ten years.

More money for development

Two per cent of land acquisition compensation amount will be set apart by government agencies such as HUDA and HSIIDC for community development and infrastructure works in the villages affected by land acquisition for industrial or residential development and one per cent of the amount will be set apart and expended on skill development initiatives for the dependents of oustees and other landless persons. ■

One more instance of squandering public funds on an unproductive activity

Rajya Sabha—Do

by **Vinod Kapoor**

THE Rajya Sabha, perhaps emboldened by the Lower House starting its own television channel in 2006, has reportedly given final shape to its long-proposed plan to have an exclusive channel similar in content, reach and purpose to the Lok Sabha one. In itself, this is not unusual. Legislatures in the UK, US and Australia are covered regularly. The problem, in the Indian context, is with each House of Parliament having its own dedicated channel.

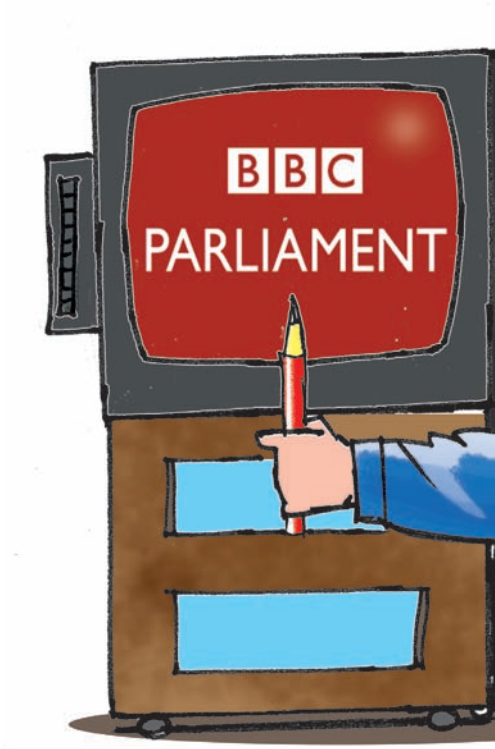
The idea of covering Parliamentary proceedings was initially conceived by United Artists Cable, funded by a consortium of British cable operators. The Parliamentary Channel was started as a cable-exclusive channel in 1992 but its relevance, historical and archival importance soon became apparent. Owing to this and its mandate as public service broadcast, the BBC took it over in 1998. Renamed BBC Parliament, it made democratic and legislative constituents more transparent to public probity and perceptions. It also ensured Parliamentary discipline in view of the impression created among the public. The channel has since widened its scope to include programmes that have a historical or broader social significance, encompassing major events.

BBC Parliament prompted Somnath Chatterjee, then Speaker of the Lok Sabha, to propose an exclusive channel for the Lower House. LSTV, as it is known, functions from the Lok Sabha library, with budgeting and programme schedules limited to issues and events linked to Indian democracy and history. With scarce technical inputs, it seeks Doordarshan's help for all major live coverage. It is an offshoot of the agenda and mandate embodied in the charter and codes of Doordarshan.

Public service broadcast is not an easy medium. It is a combination of segments of programming intended to educate and inform viewers. It needs, besides professional acumen, a typical spirited approach to issues, social commitment, and a penchant for reaching out to the masses with objectives akin to those of an NGO. Often, it has to confront objections and public denouncement because of its limited appeal and staid programming.

Prasar Bharati, mandated to carry this agenda since 1959, is now struggling to keep within its ambit and failing to rise in estimation. Unable to fulfil most of its objectives, its dabbling in commercial activities has earned public opprobrium. A series of scams has led to erosion of relevance and respect as a public service broadcaster.

Sensing the gaps left by Doordarshan, LSTV proverbially rushed into an arena it should have feared to tread in. With few professional staffers, the baton was handed over to Bhaskar Ghose – a bureaucrat who had picked up a great deal about broadcasting as DG, Doordarshan. He prepared the initial programming frame, along the pattern of DD-III (later rechristened DD Bharati). It was a mix of concepts long jettisoned by Doordarshan: most relied on studio-based productions which are dull.



So, what need is there for another Parliamentary channel? In the UK, both Houses of Parliament feature on one channel. The model could be followed in India. Creating space for an independent channel for the Upper House leaves little scope professionally too. Its content related to Indian

The proposed channel, with a stated project cost of Rs 25 crore and initial technical support from BECIL, will not be able to make inroads into the limited audience, which has already been captured by Doordarshan.

es it need a TV channel?

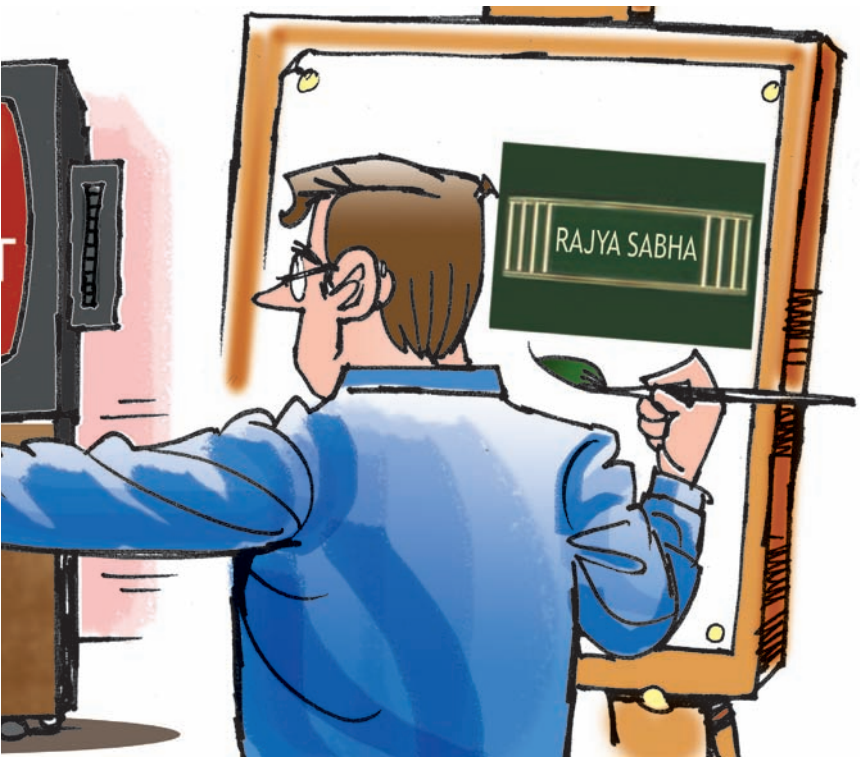


ILLUSTRATION: ARUNA

democracy and the history of Parliament would be neither exclusive nor provide anything varied from LSTV. Since all the Parliamentary Committees include MPs from both Houses, RSTV would repeat programmes already telecast on LSTV. The issues raised would be common and the socially interactive programmes would revolve around similar themes.

The proposed channel, which has a stated project cost of Rs 25 crore and will initially derive technical support from BECIL, will obviously not be able to make inroads into the limited audience, which has already been captured by Doordarshan. Also, it could be eyeing public sector funding to sustain itself and, again, the scope to cannibalize revenue would be minimal.

A flood of applicants for broadcast licences recently has forced the I&B Ministry to seek recommendations from the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). With 560 licences already issued, while 250 applications await clearance, the Ministry is besieged with complaints about at least 100 channels which are non-operational or never began operations at all. TRAI, while not agreeing to spectrum shortage, recommended that stringent financial and expertise qualifications for new TV channel licence applicants be made mandatory. Under such rules, how can RSTV qualify its credentials as "expert in broadcasting"? Even the posting of an OSD to the Chairman as RSTV's CEO has not invoked professional cheer.

The nation is disgruntled with the political system and rampant corruption.Viewers would hardly be enthused about a channel portraying the virtues and contributions of MPs.

MORE important, in the current political scenario, the nation is disgruntled with the political system and rampant corruption. Viewers would hardly be enthused about a channel portraying the virtues and contributions of MPs. Public apathy would not get it enough eyeballs to call itself even an educational channel.

Another serious failing, which the Rajya Sabha itself is aware of, is the bureaucracy's overlording in a professional and technical domain. Doordarshan and, to a lesser level, LSTV have suffered from untrained bureaucrats strangling professional expression. Bhaskar Ghose, the first CEO of LSTV, has emphasized that LSTV's major failing is the complete control over minuscule matters by the channel's Secretary General. In media, autonomy in functioning is imperative for realization of potential.

Instead of a dedicated channel, the Rajya Sabha should have a slot on LSTV. This would avert the squandering of public funds for unproductive activity. g

Society for Consumers' & Investors' Protection petition for investigation of SKS Microfinance and the microfinance industry in India

Dr. Manmohan Singh
Prime Minister

Shri Pranab Mukherjee
Finance Minister

Shri Ashok Chawla
Finance Secretary

Shri R. Gopalan
Secretary (DFS)

Dr. D. Subbarao
Governor
Reserve Bank of India

Shri C.B. Bhave
Chairman, SEBI

Shri Santosh Macherla
Joint Director(TFC), CBI

Dear Sirs,

A lot has been written about SKS Microfinance and the microfinance industry in India in view of the recent happenings. Our endeavour is not to repeat what has already been said but to bring to the notice of the above authorities some interesting facts and the questions that the SKS saga has left unanswered so that care could be taken to ensure fair play for all the participants in the industry. Though the RBI has formed a sub-committee headed by YH Malegam to make recommendations relating to regulation of microfinance activities of non-banking finance companies (NBFCs), especially with regard to issues relating to borrowers' interests, little attention seems to have been paid to protect the interests of investors.

Let's first see how the financials of SKS looked just prior to the company raising a huge amount from the unsuspecting public through the IPO. The fact that most of the analysts have everything positive to talk about the company and its financials speaks volumes about their understanding of the industry and depth of the subject called accounting which only helped the cause of the company but at a huge cost to the investors at large. Those analysts are now hard to trace.

The financials of the company are summarized as follows:

The basis for the entire analysis is the secondary data as provided by the company mainly through its Red Herring Prospectus (RHP) as submitted to SEBI.

SKS Microfinance Ltd. was incorporated in 2003 to take over SKS Society (Swayam Krishi Sangam), an NGO, and further equity was diluted to 5 newly created Mutual Benefit Trusts (MBT) with the object of promoting and enhancing the Social and Economic Welfare of Groups of Women belonging to the weaker sections of society. But most of the observers feel that the NGO has been converted into a company mainly to make substantial money from the capital market. The company sold its shares at Rs. 985 per share (highest price band of the book build IPO) through the recently concluded IPO. The investors feel cheated with which most of the investment analysts now agree since the price was kept way higher than what the fundamentals of the company warrant. The following facts adequately support the same and also demonstrate how

Annexure - I

	SKS MICROFINANCE LTD.				
Rs in Crores	**Sept. 10** Six months	**2009**	**08**	**07**	**06**
Sales	341	506	162	44	9
Other Income	43	48	8	1	1
Finance Exp	128	194	56	14	3
PBT	86	124	28	5	
Tax	30	44	12	3	
Net	56	80	16	2	2
EPS (annualised) in Rs	23	16	3.6	0.7	
Loans&Advances	2827	1435	793	271	79
Loans Taken	2602	2097	789	249	69
Equity	48	48	44	27	14
Premium	553	504	147	41	
P&L	125	80	16	3	1
Statutory Reserves	31	20	4		
Net Worth	**770**	**664**	**212**	**71**	**15**
Book Value in Rs	160	138	48	26	10
PE at IPO Price	42				

Note: IPO Prospectus page no. 42 & 44.

promoters and those acting in concert with them made huge gains:

- The Book Value was Rs.160 and Price to Book Value came to 6.15 times against the industry norms of 1.5 (normal) to 3 times (maximum).
- The company has a very short history of 4 years for its financials and surprisingly the last 2.5 years have witnessed a quantum jump in its financial performance. (Annexure 1)
- Cost of acquisition to the Main Promoter comes to Rs. 41.97 per share only.
- Cost of acquisition to the PE Promoter comes to Rs. 78.80 only.
- Average period of Investment of Main Promoter and PE Promoter is not more than 4 years and Main Promoter gain comes to Rs.1723.79 crore on investment of Rs. 76.75 crore. And PE Promoter gain comes to Rs. 1607.37 crore on investment of Rs. 139.77 crore. (Annexure 2)
- Shares were issued to various investors during the period between 26th March 2009 to 19th January 2010 at Rs. 300 per share only. (Annexure 3)

Other income at Rs. 48 crore is substantial for FY09 as against the PBT of Rs. 124 crore and for half year ended Sept '09 is Rs. 43 crore against PBT of Rs. 86 crore. This indicates that the other income had played a major role in boosting the profitability of the company. In the normal way, other income should not be given a PE of more than 10 which leaves the normal PE for the business income to reach a staggering 80. A PE of 80 by any standard is considered exorbitant even for most lucrative of businesses let alone a business that has social welfare at its core.

Vikram Akula, CEO and founder, SKS Microfinance

Besides the aforementioned observations, the regulators need to find answers to the following questions:

- The company (SKS Micro) was incorporated in 2003 to take over an NGO, namely, M/s SWAYAM KRISHI SANGAM (SKS). Was the takeover of the Society the main objective of the Company at the time of formation since no such information is provided in the RHP?
- An NGO is a non-governmental non-profitmaking organization and is supposed to work for social welfare or promoting some socially relevant cause. Was this sale permitted by the by-laws of the NGO Society?
- Who were the original founder-members of the Society?
- Under which Act was the Society formed and what was the date of its formation?
- What were the financials of the Society from the beginning to the date of sale of business?
- Normally, an NGO can sell its business to any other NGO/Society with an identical nature of business and objectives. Does it not mean that the purchaser of the business should also work with a no-profit policy?
- When sold, how was the price of business fixed?
- When sold, how were the proceeds from the sale of the business distributed between the members of the Society i.e. beneficiaries of sales proceeds?
- After the sale of the business, did the Society cease to exist or continue its activities in some other form?
- Was the Society exempted from income tax u/s 12AA at any time during its period of existence?
- Were the contributions to the Society at any point of time granted exemption u/s 80G of Income-Tax Act, 1961?
- Can inference be drawn to the fact that profitability of the business in the Society was undermined and gains/profits suppressed by the Society?
- Was any resolution passed in the General Body Meeting of the Society permitting the sale of the business? If so, provide the copy of the said resolution.
- While the business was purchased, was it purchased in toto or were only a part of the activities of the Society purchased?

Annexure - 3

SKS MICROFINANCE LTD.

Statement of Major Shares Issued Within 12 Months of IPO

Date of Issue	Name	Nos. of Shares Issued	Price	Value in Rs.
26-Mar-09	**SIP I**	2085448	300	625634400
	KISMET SKS II	885044	300	265513200
	ICP HOLDINGS	81383	300	24414900
18-Aug-09		416666	300	124999800
8-Dec-09	**SIP I**	6256344	300	1876903200
	KISMET SKS II	2655131	300	796539300
	ICP HOLDINGS	244150	300	73245000
	Bajaj Allianz Insurance	1250000	300	375000000
19-Jan-10	**Catamaran Maupent**	937770	300	281331000
	Suresh Gurmani	225000	300	67500000
	Total	**15036936**		**4511080800**

Note: IPO Prospectus Page No. XVII

Annexure - 2

SKS MICROFINANCE LTD.

(Details of Equity Transactions - Promoter Group)

	Share Held Before IPO			Offer For Sale			Share holding after IPO			GAINS
	Qty	Rate in Rs.	Value in Crores.	Qty	Rate in Rs.	Value in Crores.	Qty	Rate in Rs.	Value in Crores.	in Crores.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(6)+(9)-(3)
(A) Promoter (Main)										
MBT Narayankhed	2153693	31.58	6.8	448108	985	44.13	1705585	985	167.94	205.27
MBT Jogipeth	2053683	32.62	6.7	391417	985	38.55	1662266	985	163.7	195.55
MBT Medak	2053683	32.62	6.7	391417	985	38.55	1662266	985	163.7	195.55
MBT Sadasivpet	2053683	32.62	6.7	391417	985	38.55	1662266	985	163.7	195.55
MBT Savparedy	2053683	32.62	6.7	391417	985	38.55	1662266	985	163.7	195.55
SKS Capital	7914250	54.53	43.15	2279396	985	224.52	5634854	985	554.95	736.32
Total	18282675	216.59	76.75	4293172		422.85	13989503	5910		1723.79
(B) Promoter (PE Fund)										
SCI II (Seqvoia)	9095550	61.18	55.64	3989703	985	392.91	5105847	985	502.84	840.11
SCI GI I (Sequoia)	4951474	137.53	68.09				4951474	985	487.72	419.63
MUC (Mauritus Unitus Group)	3692129	43.45	16.04	1063381	985	104.74	2628748	985	258.93	347.63
Total	17739153	242.16	139.77	5053084		497.65	12686069		1249.49	1607.37

Gains include gain from IPO and Notional gain on remaining shareholding at IPO price of Rs.985/- per share.
Note : IPO Prospectus Page No. 33, 35 & 68

- The equity of the company was diluted to Mutual Benefit Trusts (MBTs). Who were the beneficiaries of these trusts?
- What were the sources of money that was lent to poor people? Please provide the details for the entire period of the Society's existence.
- Was the money lent by the Society sourced as corpus of the Society or was it borrowed money?

Page 73 of DRHP says: After several years of operations as an NGO, SKS Society with its inherent not-for-profit business model was limited in its ability to address the credit needs of the poor throughout India. Accordingly, SKS Society decided it would transfer its business and operations to us as of a newly incorporated Pvt. Ltd. Co. in 2003. Please provide the details of the following:

I. Whether the said transfer of business was for some consideration or without it.

II. How did the Society shortlist SKS for transfer of the business?

III. Were there any links between the Society and SKS or was there any relationship between the members of both the entities?

To control various mutual benefit trusts (MBTs) formed at the time of SKS, a new company named SKS Trust Advisors Pvt. Ltd. was floated on 10.11.2009 with a paid-up capital of Rs.1 lakh only (page 74 of DRHP mentions that this company was floated with the name of Utthan Tust Advisors Pvt. Ltd. which was subsequently changed to SKS Trust Advisors Pvt. Ltd. However, to the best of our information, no company in this name ever existed.) Please provide all the details of Utthan Tust Advisors Pvt. Ltd. such as the date of incorporation, place where incorporated, promoters, paid-up capital, directors, main objects, etc.

What were the compelling reasons or circumstances that led to the change in directors of SKS Trust Advisors Pvt. Ltd to Shri Vikram Akula and Shri Ankur Sarin in March 2010?

The company is providing rural insurance facility also. Which are the companies/policies etc.?

Please explain whether MBT owns more than one Self Help Group (SHG) or SHGs itself have been renamed as MBT?

Thanks and Regards,

President, Society for Consumers' & Investors' Protection (Regd)
New Delhi

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FIRST STIRRINGS SHANKAR SHARAN

GOVERNANCE: RISE OF THE KLEPTOLORD

Happy Deepavali!

From the Editor-in-Chief

THE worst reason put forth to justify holding the Commonwealth Games (CWG) in New Delhi was that this grand event would showcase a brilliant new India to the world. It would be the window through which the whole international community would see India in a novel light rather than out of the tinted frames of the past that showed our nation as a murky, backward, hopelessly slothful,

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SPECIAL REPORT

energy pricing

It's Politics, STUPID!

The hostility to wealth creat... their ... firma, the ma... economy, ... the ... vote-wooing po...

IN its befuddled approach towards a governance mantra for natural resources, the ruling political elite harps on the rich-poor divide. Be it land, met... or oil ... the bias against the well-off is t...

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NATIONAL SECURITY

military role

The Last Post for the soldier

The trend in democratic nations is to downsize armies, by choice or necessity

THESE are not happy days for armies in the democratic world. Their influence on national policymaking is waning as the scope and content of national security grows well beyond physical security. The process is not uniform and varies with historical military traditions and the ethos of different nations.

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When common sense eludes lawmakers

Anil Kakodkar is an eminent Indian nuclear scientist and mechanical engineer. He was the Chairman of the ...

COVER STORY

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Is this $12-billion project a sleight-of-land venture to short-sell Indian resources and seafront heritage?

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democracy to kleptocracy

Rise of the KLEPT...LORD

In... ...s are ... ...dual d...

T... ...y see... ...n We... Bengal perpetuated the myth that the defeat in the State was due to the alliance between the Congress and the Trinamool Congress (TC) of Mamata Banerjee. It is ...

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district collector, gadchiroli | atul n patney

'Development is the only answer to tackling Naxalism'

An officer at the grassroots level shares innovative ...lopment schemes for ...ibals

T... ...ach... tackling Naxalism can be ...t... ...le... at Lohri, where a few months ...g... ...d ... place when the Naxalites attacked a police party. We decided to hold a social ...curity awareness ...

...R...

FIRST STIRRINGS

shankar sharan

'ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT EXPERIENCES IN LIFE IS TO BE FREE'

Lal Bahadur Shastri's nephew recalls being a reluctant bureaucrat, yearning to join JP, and setting up MTNL

A 1996-batch IPS officer of the AGMUT cadre, DCP ...

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arvind s inamdar

'POLITICAL INTERFERENCE HAS CREATED HAVOC'

The former DGP of Maharashtra, famed for tackling Naxalites and gangsters, laments the amending of the Bombay Police Act which has emasculated the force

MY first real challenge came in 1976 when I was posted as Deputy Commissioner of Police in Nagpur. Naxal ideologue Kondapalli Seetharamaiah had by then acquired quite a notoriety for his acts of barbarism in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. One day, during a routine *nakabandi* in Nagpur city, one of my constables felt there was something suspicious about a hand-pulled rickshaw and its passenger. On inspection, we found explosives, bullets and timer devices hidden inside.

At the time I was handling charge of the state CID Crime Branch and the special services branch. Sustained interrogation revealed that the rickshawwallah was based in the Hanuman Nagar area of Nagpur. We took him into confidence and put him up in a secret and safe place. Twenty-one days later, Seetharamaiah walked into our trap. We arrested him. The Andhra Pradesh government had placed a reward of Rs 50,000 on his head. He had committed several murders and was spearheading the Naxalite movement in AP. We managed to nab his associates as well. But, after we handed him over to the Andhra Pradesh police, he managed to escape from their custody.

My next biggest challenge came in 1987 when I was Joint Commissioner of Police, Mumbai. Those were the days when gang wars and underworld gangs were ruling the roost in Mumbai. The gangs had begun to rear their heads around 1985. Underworld dons like Dawood Ibrahim, Karim Lala and Bada Rajan had started their own gangs.

I had some contacts and needed to revive them quickly. There were informers who gave us inside information. One of them was really testing us, trying to ascertain whether I had the guts to take on the might of Dawood and raid his den in Pakhmodia Street in south Mumbai. In those days, even the police did not dare enter the street. Determined, I decided to raid Dawood's den. The policemen had to resort to firing when we raided his den. We found jackets and bags full of gold.

My next biggest catch was Arun Gawli a few years later. We were facing a tough time in arresting and imprisoning these gangsters. People like Gawli were creating a hell of a problem for the police. Businessmen, film personalities and other prominent people were receiving threats for ransom. The Centre had enacted the Terrorist And Disruptive Activities Act (TADA).

We requested the Centre to extend the jurisdiction of the Act to Maharashtra. Because of that we were able to put gangsters like Gawli behind bars for close to 11 years. The government later withdrew the Act. Thereafter, I was part of the commission that prepared the draft for the Prevention of Terrorist Activities Act (POTA). Since gangsterism was on the rise and the Centre had repealed the laws, we in Maharashtra came up with the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crimes Act (MCOCA).

My biggest disappointment came around the early 1990s when we almost managed to nab Dawood Ibrahim's trusted aide, Chhota Shakeel, in Kolkata. That was the time when we came across the lacunae in our laws. The High Courts in Kolkata and Chennai had original powers to grant bail. That is how, despite our arrest, Shakeel managed to get bail and escaped to Dubai. By 2000 we had broken the backs of the underworld gangs.

Since 2000, the images of the State and Mumbai police have been disintegrating. Earlier it was a murmur, now it has become a crescendo – that police officers in Maharashtra are posted on influence and monetary considerations. Efficiency, loyalty and competence have

I raided the den of Dawood (left) in Pakhmodia Street in south Mumbai. In those days, even the police did not dare...

SOLARIS IMAGES

all taken a back seat. The Telgi fake stamps scam has literally shaken the police establishment in the State to its core. Right from the Commissioner of Police to the constable, all were involved.

SLOWLY, police postings began taking place on the basis of proximity to politicians. A few of us never bowed to this political pressure. Orders were issued from Mantralaya and the office of the Commissioner of Police was reduced to the status of a mere post office. The powers of the Director General of Police were also reduced. Neither of them now has powers to take action against erring subordinate officers or constables.

Around 1987 the then Chief Minister amended the Bombay Police Act. In one bolt of lightning, an IAS officer, that is, the Home Secretary, was made head of the police department. Since then the IAS lobby has always loved to keep the IPS cadre as its bridesmaid. Modern-day policing has become highly specialized, often dangerous and complicated. What does a Home Secretary know about policing, about the psyche of the policeman on bandobast duty? Do they have the expertise to guide us on how to tackle Naxalism, terrorism, gang wars or VVIP security? After giving 36 years of your life to the service, you are treated like this. Can they do this with the Army? Whenever the issue of modernization of the force comes up, it is the Home department that puts in a spoke. They want the policemen to come to them on bended knees. We have seen what the IAS lobby can do, in the recent Adarsh Society scam.

Until 1987 even the Union Home Ministry used to seek a second opinion from the Maharashtra police. That was because our expertise in detection and solving cases was second to none. The slight improvement in weaponry that is seen today is because of our relentless efforts to convince the Union government to sanction more funds. But the IAS lobby has once again delivered the IPS lobby a death blow by lowering our pay scales in the sixth Pay Commission recommendations.

Nowadays, the DGP or the CP has no power to even sack a constable or write the confidential reports of his subordinate officers. The result of the political interference has been such that even a low-ranking constable or a sub-inspector does not hesitate to directly approach the politician and complain about his seniors or seek a posting. A single amendment to the Bombay Police Act has resulted in discipline in the force being thrown out of the window.

During a crisis or a VVIP visit, the policeman is denied his due holiday. A constable gets his first promotion after 18 to 24 years of service. He joins the service at the age of 20. The expectation is that he should at least retire as a sub-inspector.

A sub-inspector is least interested in seeking promotion to the rank of Assistant Commissioner of Police. That is because of the high level of corruption involved. Though, under the current Maharashtra Home Minister, RR Patil, political interference in police recruitments has stopped, it has not stopped in matters of postings and transfers. They might talk of police reforms but the current political establishment clearly lacks the will to usher in real reform. g

(A 1964-batch IPS officer, Inamdar opted for voluntary retirement in 1999 with about a year's service left, foregoing the right to claim perks amounting to Rs 10 lakh. That he was transferred 29 times in a career spanning 36 years tells its own tale.)
As told to Prashant Hamine

...enter the street. The policemen had to resort to firing. We found bags full of gold. My next catch was Arun Gawli (right)

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Reshuffle your portfolio, but warily

THE markets have again belied the expectations of most analysts who continued to maintain that there was not much downside in them. The two most significant arguments put forth for this was the cash position with domestic mutual funds that are waiting to deploy it and the eagerly anticipating retail investors who seem to have missed the bus.

The markets have corrected by almost 10 percent from the Sensex high of 21,000 touched recently. There are thousands of factors that influenced the markets and it is not possible to analyse their impact. Analysts examine only some of the factors that prima facie appear to be the most significant such as growth in credit, industrial growth, capital issues, inflation, FII investments, exchange rate movements, changes in forex reserves and mutual fund investments.

However, it so happens that someone somewhere sneezes and everybody starts catching the cold. The sentiment may drive the market in such a way that despite everything, including the economic conditions, being good, a single event such as interest rate hike or political uncertainty may lead to steep decline. The excerpts of a study by Madan Sabnavis of CARE, published in *The Economic Times* make this abundantly clear when it concludes that factors such as growth in credit, industrial production, exchange rates and forex reserves do not impact the markets. Higher inflation and increase in IPO activity have a negative relation whereas net FII and mutual fund investments have a very insignificant positive impact on the Sensex. The study concludes that all these variables explain only 48 percent of variation in the Sensex, implying that more than 50 percent of Sensex movement may in fact be sentiment-driven.

Another important observation I would like to mention is the one made by Dhirendra Kumar in his column in *The Hindustan Times* that is of great relevance to small investors. He says they should be guided more by their personal goals than by what they expect the markets to do. He cites the example of two contestants appearing on *Kaun Banega Crorepati*. One, having already won Rs 1 crore, went on to answer the next question even though he wasn't sure of his reply and lost everything. The other quit at Rs 12.5 lakh even though she was fairly confident of the next answer, which would have been correct. These two people represent two very common categories of investors, one intelligent but overconfident and the other probably not that intelligent but wise. Despite the fact that most of the experts have been suggesting that there is still enough steam left in the markets, it is the wise investors who have been booking profits at regular intervals. Also, we should not forget that in view of faltering growth in the developed world, the chances of emerging markets growing by them and driving global growth may not sound realistic. The emerging markets, including India, are not decoupled from the rest of the world and anything negative about global markets is bound to impact the Indian markets as well. The investors should therefore reshuffle their portfolios in the light of this fact.

Despite most experts suggesting that there is still enough steam left in the markets, it is the wise investors who have been booking profits regularly.

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SANDUR Manganese & Iron Ores is engaged in the business of mining manganese and iron ore, production of sponge iron, project consultancy and supervision. The total mining area of the company stands at 2005 hectares with reserves of over 50 million tonnes of iron ore and 25 million tonnes of manganese ore. The valuation of these reserves comes to Rs 15,000 crore, assuming beaten down valuation of Rs 4,000 per tonne for manganese ore and Rs 1,000 per tonne for iron ore. The promoters are holding at 75 percent which provides added confidence. The company has a ferro alloys plant, Star Metallics and Power Pvt Ltd, at Vyasankere, Karnataka, which is a 74 percent subsidiary.

The company has reported good results in H1 FY 2011 with EPS spurting to Rs 53.64 as compared to Rs 33.34 for the entire FY 2009-10. At an EPS of about Rs 100 for FY 2010-11, its PE at the CMP will be less than eight as against the industry PE of around 15. The company has a debt of roughly Rs 18 crore towards working capital advances and also has cash kept as bank deposits and investment in various mutual funds of Rs 125 crore. Investors can get decent returns with hardly any downside by investing in the stock with a long-term perspective. g

The author has no exposure in the stock recommended in this column. gfiles *does not accept responsibility for investment decisions by readers of this column. Investment-related queries may be sent to gfilesindia@gmail.com with Dr Sood's name in the subject line.*

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For the complete list, see www.gfilesindia.com

For a complete list of appointments & retirements, see ***www.gfilesindia.com***

SYED NASIM A ZAIDI
The 1976-batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre has been appointed Secretary, Civil Aviation.

TARUN KANTI MISHRA
The 1975-batch IAS officer has taken over as Chief Information Commissioner in Orissa.

SANJEEV TRIPATHI
The 1972-batch R&AW officer has taken over as chief of the Research &Analysis Wing.

KC VERMA
The 1971-batch IPS officer of the Jharkhand cadre is now Chairman of the National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO).

UK BANSAL
The 1974-batch IPS officer of the Uttarakhand cadre has become Secretary, Internal Security, in the Ministry of Home Affairs.

T CHATTERJEE
The 1975-batch IAS officer of the Andhra Pradesh cadre has been appointed OSD in the Ministry of Forests and Environment.

NAVEEN VERMA
The 1982-batch IAS officer of the Bihar cadre has become Joint Secretary, National Security Council Secretariat.

ARUNA SUNDAR RAJAN
The 1982-batch IAS officer of the Kerala cadre is now Joint Secretary, Housing and Poverty Alleviation.

ANIL SRIVASTAVA
The1985-batch IAS officer, Principal Secretary, Revenue, in the Madhya Pradesh government, has been empanelled to the rank of Joint Secretary in the Government of India.

DHANALAKSHMI GOWDA
The 2000-batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre is now private secretary to External Affairs Minister SM Krishna.

UPMA SHRIVASTAVA
The 1988-batch IAS officer of the Sikkim cadre has been appointed Joint Secretary (Training) in the DoPT.

PRAKASH MISHRA
The 1977-batch IPS officer of the Orissa cadre has become Additional Director General in the National Investigating Agency.

AMITABH RAJAN
The 1979-batch IAS officer of the Maharashtra cadre is now Additional Secretary, Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, in the Department of Personnel.

NILANJAN SANYAL
The 1979-batch IAS officer of the Orissa cadre is now Additional Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development.

VINOD KUMAR
The High Commissioner of India to Fiji has been concurrently accredited as the High Commissioner to Tuvalu, with residence in Suva.

AJAY M GONDANE
The 1985-batch IFS officer has taken over as High Commissioner to Papua New Guinea.

NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA
The 1988-batch IDES officer has been appointed Director in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

PC HALDAR
The 1970-batch IPS officer of the Bihar cadre has been granted one year's extension as Interlocutor, Assam.

NK SINGH
The 1987-batch IFS officer of the Gujarat cadre is now Managing Director of the Agro Industries Development Corporation, Gujarat.

BHARAT LAL
The 1988-batch IAS officer of the Gujarat cadre has been appointed Resident Commissioner in Delhi of the Gujarat government.

ANWAR HALEEM
The 1991-batch IFS officer has become Deputy Director General in the ICCR.

RAMESH NARAINSWAMY
The 1971-batch IAS officer is now Chairman of the Public Grievances Commission in the Delhi government.

VIVEK SAXENA
The 1992-batch IFS officer of the Haryana cadre is now Director, IFS-2 & AGMUT cadre management, in the Ministry of Forests and Environment.

AR CHADHA
The 1981-batch IFS officer of the Maharashtra cadre has been appointed IG in the Ministry of Forests and Environment.

ABHISHEKH TRIVEDI
The 1996-batch IPS officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre is now Deputy Director, Intelligence Bureau, New Delhi.

Moving On: ias officers retiring in December 2010

ASSAM-MEGHALAYA
Mohammed Allauddin (1993)

ANDHRA PRADESH
Rachel Chatterjee (1975)
Ashok Kumar Tigidi (1976)
MVPC Sastry (1977)

BIHAR
Anil Bhushan Prasad (1976)

HIMACHAL PRADESH
Avay Shukla (1975)

JAMMU & KASHMIR
Satinder Singh Sahni (1974)
Shri B Ahmad Khawaja (1995)

KERALA
Kuruvila John (1982)

KARNATAKA
Vatsala Watsa (1973)
AK Monappa (1992)
Abdul Bari Nawab (1992)

MADHYA PRADESH
PG Gillore (1996)
Jagdish Sharma (1996)

MANIPUR-TRIPURA
W Ajit Singh (1998)

SUBRAMANIAM
The 1992-batch IFS officer of the AGMUT cadre has been appointed Conservator of Forests, Arunachal Pradesh.

RN SENAPATI
The 1977-batch IAS officer is now Development Commissioner, Orissa.

NEERAJ THAKUR
The 1994-batch IPS officer of the AGMUT cadre is now Deputy Director, Intelligence Bureau.

DILIP TRIVEDI
The 1978-batch IPS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre has been appointed ADG, ITBP.

MUKESH JOSHI
The 1974-batch IRS officer has joined as Member of the CBDT.

HARDEEP SRIVASTAVA
The 1974-batch IRS officer is now Member of the Central Board of Direct Taxes.

MAHESH CHANDRA LADDHA
The 1988-batch IPS officer of the Andhra Pradesh cadre has become SP, NIA, in Delhi.

NC ASTHANA
The 1986-batch IPS officer of the Kerala cadre has been appointed IG (COBRA), CRPF.

VIMLA MEHRA
The 1978-batch IPS officer of the AGMUT cadre has become Special CP (Security), Delhi Police.

SS YADAV
The 1985-batch IPS officer of the AGMUT cadre has been transferred as Joint CP at Delhi Police headquarters.

Shirodkar and group win IEDRA award

ATUL D Shirodkar, Chairman and Managing Director of Reatox Group of Companies, the Mumbai-based builders and developers currently constructing two prestigious projects in Nagpur, First City and Classic in the MIHAN SEZ, has been conferred the Indian Achievers Award for Industrial Excellence, instituted by Indian Economic Development & Research Association (IEDRA).

IEDRA was formed for the economic and social development of individuals and organisations, and operates on national and international levels to promote economic welfare of all nations. It confers annual awards to honour individuals, organisations and institutions for outstanding contributions and achievements in their respective fields. These include economic development in industry, finance and business.

The IEDRA award recognises and honours both Shirodkar and his group on a national basis for outstanding contributions in their field. The Reatox Group of Companies comprise Reatox Builders & Developers Pvt Ltd, Atul Shirodkar & Associates RMC Product Pvt Ltd, Reatox RMC Developers Pvt Ltd, Reatox Guru Developers, Reatox Resorts & Hotels Pvt Ltd, Reatox Minerals & Metals Pvt Ltd, Reatox Infrastructure Pvt Ltd and Reatox Publications Pvt Ltd.

Shirodkar, a professionally qualified engineer, has vast experience in construction of integrated townships, redevelopment, resorts and spas, production of concrete, bricks and paver blocks, highway development works, enveloping highways, bridges, flyovers, rail and overbridges, grade separators for vehicular and pedestrian traffic, foot overbridges, and urban planning. His core expertises are slum rehabilitation and redevelopment of existing old clusters.

His group, through its widespread activities, has constructions spread over 1.2 million square feet and aims to complete the mammoth task of 15 million square feet by 2013.

The award will be presented to Shirodkar at the National Seminar and Awards function on "Outstanding Contributions to National Development" to be held in New Delhi on December 9, 2010.

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NTPC boss inducts henchmen

ARUP Roy Choudhury, 50, has taken over the reins of India's most powerful company, the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), as its Chairman and Managing Director. It has been a tradition in the NTPC that every chairman runs his office with the existing setup of personal secretaries and personal assistants.

But Choudhury brought three deputy general managers from his former organization, NBCC. These DGMs used to work with him when he was CMD in NBCC. The move has created a wary atmosphere in the organization. It is being said in the NTPC's SCOPE complex office that all the work is being done by these DGMs and the personal secretaries and assistants have become redundant.

Mumbai cops uncover a scam within

IT is anybody's guess why the account of the Mumbai Police was transferred from State Bank of India to Axis Bank, a relative novice in the banking industry. Government departments are generally wary of private banks when it comes to the salary account. But the Mumbai Police, for whatever reason, set a new

precedent under the baton of former commissioner Anami N Roy, a Sharad Pawar acolyte.

Roy also failed to look after the interests of lower-grade police personnel. When Mumbai cops applied for housing loans from the bank, they were told that the account had been transferred on the understanding that no housing loan would be sanctioned for a while. The personnel need the loans as the Maharashtra Police Housing and Welfare Corporation has performed woefully. Nearly 46 percent of Mumbai and Maharashtra police personnel are still without decent accommodation.

Senior police officials took up the matter with the top bosses, pointing out that the transfer was unwarranted and the no-loan policy amounted to a denial of rights. The issue was then resolved. The cops can now avail of housing loans from Axis Bank.

Who put Zaidi in Civil Aviation?

BELIEVE it or not, the private airline operators are the de facto bosses of the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Director General of Civil Aviation. The airlines operators have evolved a formula to rule over these powerful entities – by employing the children of some of the top officials. This, we are told, is the reason nobody knows what is happening regarding the air-worthiness of aircraft and the

competence of pilots. There are no updates on both issues in the DGCA and the Ministry.

As for Nasim Zaidi, the new Secretary in the Ministry, his son works for a large and influential airline. It is said that a lobby of private airline operators, with whom Minister Praful Patel has close links, put Zaidi in the post.

Batchmates gather for Lavasa wedding

IN these ostentatious times, it is warming to find level-headed and unassuming people. Ashok Lavasa, the 1980-batch IAS officer from Haryana who is Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Power, recently married off his daughter in a cere-

ILLUSTRATIONS: ARUNA

mony marked by simplicity and sobriety in Suraj Kund, Faridabad. The gathering, a virtual reunion of the 1980 batch, also highlighted the popularity of Lavasa, a photographer of repute.

Former Haryana Chief Secretaries MC Gupta and Vishnu Bhagwan were there and Home Secretary GK Pillai and wife Sudha Pillai had undertaken the trip from Delhi. Lavasa has also served as Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs and the camaraderie was evident. g

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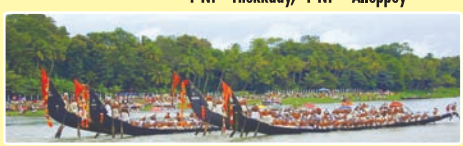

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Shimla	–	Leela Regency	₹ 4,250/- MAP	Nainital	–	Vikram Vintage	₹ 6,000/- MAP
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Corbett	–	The Den	₹ 4,999/- AP	Kanatal	–	The Terraces	₹ 7,500/-* MAP
				Sariska	–	Sariska Palace	₹ 6,999/- CP

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